

YAIY BEACON

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**Essential: Love and Humility
Following the Messiah
Leadership of Men
Love One Another
Problems Looking For a Solution
Moses Wrote About Me!**

INTRODUCTION

Churchianity in general has not been faithful in following the Bible. Surprisingly, many of today's popular teachings and customs are not based in Scripture. We strive to return to the old paths of truth that have largely been ignored, and obediently follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer of Israel, Jude 3.

We observe the weekly Sabbath (on the seventh day) known as Saturday, just as did the Savior, Luke 4:16, as well as Paul and the Apostles, Acts 13:42-46; 17:2; 18:4.

We also call our Heavenly Father by His revealed, personal Name Yahweh, which He says is His memorial Name forever, Exodus 3:15. Most pastors, Bible scholars, and seminary students will acknowledge that Yahweh is the correct Name of the Heavenly Father. The short form of His Name, Yah, can be seen in many words, including the most popular hallelujah ("halleluYAH," meaning, "praise you Yah"). It is also found in the suffix of Biblical names like IsaYAH, (Isaiah), JeremYAH (Jeremiah), NehemYAH (Nehemiah), and ObadYAH (Obadiah).

Our membership comes from nearly all denominations and all walks of life. Most began searching for deeper truth when they learned that their former affiliation was teaching another Evangel from what they found in Scripture. We continue to search the Bible for deeper understanding. We believe that the Bible teaches a way of life through the commandments in the Old Testament and from the same example of obedience given us by our Savior in the New Testament.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission and purpose is to reach people around the world with the message of the revealed personal Names of Yahweh and His Son Yahshua, the Messiah, as well as teaching the salvational truths that have been neglected for centuries.

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Essential: Love and Humility

Yahshua the Messiah pointed out many keys to Yahweh's kingdom. He stressed a certain kind of love and a certain kind of humility as essential. That love is of the type with which Yahshua loved and that humility is such that is possessed by a little child.

Love and Humility are very closely linked. Humility is lifted to a higher level when Love is added, and Love can certainly not meet all its potential without humility. It now seems silly to think one can be humble without loving, or love another with a spirit of pride or arrogance. Serving others with a loving humility is essential for a successful relationship in the family and among one's congregation.

Yahshua's Love

That Passover evening before His execution on a torture stake the next day, Yahshua washed the disciples' feet and then said,

*When He had washed their feet and put on His outer garments and resumed His place, He said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Master, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Master and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him, John 13:12-16. (**English Standard Version** used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)*

Make no mistake – a believer's loving, humble attitude extends farther than his practicing footwashing once a year. Humility is a posture we must assume every day.

Afterward, He said to them:

A new command I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all know that you are My taught ones, if you have this love for one another. John 13:34-35.

Yahshua commenced His teachings with humility, and clothed humility with love. This love Yahshua commanded is expressed through humble service to others. That love not only feeds thousands of people, and heals their sicknesses, and teaches them the way of successful living, but gives the credit to, and acknowledges Abba Yahweh. The teaching is one! Yahshua gave us many commandments. But His discourse in John, chapter 13, and what follows in the 15th chapter, is the only time in the Record of the Evangelists, that we read something He expressly said was a Command.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends, John 15:12-13.

Here, He makes friendship with Him conditional upon our obedience to His Command. It appears then, that love is become a salvation issue. Yahweh's kingdom is maintained and sustained by those who are very loving, one of another.

The Little Child

Accompanying love for one another – an important foundation principle of our faith – is that humility expressed by a little child. The startling truth is, we need to become *convertible* believers, our personalities transformed into that personality of a little child. Just like one lowers the top of a convertible automobile, we must lower down pride and arrogance and be converted into humble individuals.

How humble do we need to become? like a sweet and obedient, little child – but a baby step that is often become a giant leap for most people. What makes humility become essential, is that without it, we will NEVER enter Yahweh's Kingdom!

Is that important? Apparently, inasmuch as Yahshua affirmed, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

This seems unexpected, and even amazing. Because each child of Yahweh is intended to be a leader in Yahweh's Kingdom – kings and priests – this seems amazing ... this requirement imposed upon leaders, that they must be humble as little children.

Humility in History

Humility has been a key to many epic and historical, life-changing events – some positive, and some negative.

Humility, or rather the want of humility, was a major factor leading to Yahweh's judgments, the imposition of the ten plagues upon Egyptian society before Israel's exodus at that first. Here, we are talking about the arrogance that Pharaoh manifested before Yahweh.

So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says Yahweh, the Elohim of the Hebrews, 'How long will you refuse to HUMBLE yourself before Me'? Let My people go, that they may serve Me, Exodus 10:3, (emphasis ours).

While Pharaoh's arrogance produced the cataclysmic events upon Egyptian society, in contrast, Moses' humility was an important attribute contributing to his success as a leader, prophet, and servant of Yahweh. While we may wonder who actually penned this tribute to him in Numbers 12:3



– Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth – without question, this outstanding characteristic of humility obtained for him, an Ear to his supplications in behalf of an often recalcitrant people who were as often, less appreciative of their deliverance from lives

made rigorous with hard bondage in all manner of service to Egyptian taskmasters.

Humility, or the want of humility, also figured in Israel's spending 40 years in the wilderness. Toward the end of their 40-year, wilderness sojourn, Moses told rehearsed to them,

And you shall remember the whole way that Yahweh your Elohim has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that He might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not, Deuteronomy 8:2

Moses was able to follow Yahweh in everything because he didn't think he knew it all, or that his way was always better. He just wanted to do whatever Yahweh desired and he loved and wanted to help Yahweh's chosen people. He sought to encourage Israel, because he loved these people. Nevertheless, forty years experiencing the loving provision of Yahweh wouldn't be long enough a time for this people called Israel who tempted Him ten times, to return to Him an attitude of grateful humility.

Let's look at the Scripture again:

At that time the disciples came to Yahshua, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to Him a child, He put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, UNLESS you turn (converted, changed) and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever HUMBLER himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven," Matthew 18:1-4, (emphasis ours).

Thus, that proud nature we have assumed as we have grown up from childhood must be reversed to that humble, loving heart attitude with which every child is endowed in order to obtain a position in the kingdom of heaven.

The Apostle Paul presents a picture of a believer dressing himself in these essential garments:

Put on then, as Elohim's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Master has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Yahweh will hear and support those who seek humility which is an ongoing project for each believer!

What is Humility?

Humility is the opposite of pride, and the opposite of presumption and is neither, pretentious as Yahweh cannot be fooled. Humility neither talks about how bad one's self is, nor brags or boasts about how good one's self is.

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Philippians 2:3

Let's give definition to certain words in this verse:

Strife is angry or bitter disagreement. Vainglory is excessive pride in one's self or one's achievements, or excessive vanity. Esteem is a judgment occurring in one's mind about the value of one's self or that of another person.

Humility does not think more highly of itself (Rom. 12:3) and is not wise in its own conceit (Rom. 12:16). *For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself,* Galatians 6:3.

Humility is submission to the will of our Father, Yahweh.

Sure Indicators of Pride

Do I often talk about myself? Do I talk, but not listen? A humble person is quiet, more swift to hear and slower to speak (James 1:19). When he asks a question, he allows the other time to answer fully. He does not answer for someone else before they can open their mouth. He doesn't interrupt others in conversation. (By interrupting others, one is saying that what he has to say is much more important than what others might have to say, and suggests that one thinks he is much better and more important than every other.)

But the humble person will respect others enough to value whatever they feel is important, and value of listening to them in order to understand them. May Yahweh help us!

If you get to feeling pretty good about yourself,

just consider, **there is more hope for a fool than for a man who is wise in his own eyes** (Prov. 26:12).

What Does Yahweh Say?

My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways, says Yahweh. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts, Isaiah 55:8-9.

Apart from having a disposition toward humility, we can't even think the same way as Yahweh thinks. Moreover, He declares, "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite" (Isa. 57:15).

Humility is basic to our future as Yahweh's children, as essential to a transformed, renewed-in-the-spirit-of-our-mind nature, as faith, hope, and love.

Yahshua's Example

Yahshua's example is recorded for our instruction. Yahshua's humility comes through in His garden prayer in which He says, "Not My will but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

During His ministry, Yahshua manifested His submission to the Father by telling people, "I have been sent..." rather than standing on his own authority. He only wanted to be known as the Father's Agent.

In John 5:30, He declared, *I can do nothing on My own. As I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will but the will of Him Who sent Me.*

And again,

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will but the will of Him Who sent Me. And this is the will of Him Who sent Me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given Me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day, John 6:38-40.

Another attribute of loving humility, and expounded upon by Yahshua in the Evangelists, finds its root in the Torah. There, we are commanded to lovingly correct our brother when we see that he is sinning.

From Leviticus 19:17, we read:

You shall not hate your brother in your heart: you shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not allow sin upon him.

Yahshua obeyed this command and He was able to do so, because He knew what was naturally in man (John 2:25) ... that in his flesh, dwelt no good thing (Rom. 7:18). And because He was a practitioner of love, He was able to bring sin to one's attention without hurting the person or provoking him to reject this message of reconciliation to His Father's favor. And we can learn to do this, too, by carefully examining Yahshua's tact. As you read the record of what He said and what He did, strive yourself to imitate the Messiah.

And the Master's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. Yahweh may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will, 2 Timothy 2:24-26.

My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins, James 5:19-20.

We can appreciate Yahshua's example of, and His teaching about, love and humility by reading the accounts of His ministry in the four Evangelists. Interestingly, elsewhere in the New Testament we read about what constitutes love in 1 Corinthians 13, but notice how that love is longsuffering and is kind; envies not; is not puffed up or vaunts itself; does not behave itself unseemly; seeks not its own; is not easily provoked; thinks no evil, rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things and endures all things – all these attributes of love are only possibly expressed by those who are humble. We can see then, how humility comprises a large part of love and that only the path of humility, love and, of course, righteousness, leads us to where Yahshua is now, by His Father's side.

Humility for Believers

We must become humble as a little child – quiet, obedient, helpful, friendly, open and loving. But we decide to be humble. Coming to humility by a decision of our will assures us that our heart is really in the project.

By humility, Yahweh has given us a powerful key to success in our relationships within the community, within the Assembly – both as members and as leaders – and with Him.

There are several, really good and essential

reasons for every one of us to strive toward becoming humble. Consider this as principal among the many reasons:

If My people, who are called by My Name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land, 2 Chronicles 7:14.

Conclusion

Consider life as having a two-fold purpose: Becoming humble as a little child and loving others as Yahshua has loved – neither looking upon, nor seeking His own, but the profit of others; spending and being spent in behalf of others; loving more abundantly, even though we should in return be less loved – and all done, and able to be done, because of having become humble.

Love and humility – they should become our life's goal ... strongly related one to the other, and not possible to have one without the other.

Indeed, without the binding link between them, neither humility nor love will be expressed as Yahshua commanded. If perfect love casts out fear, it can only do so by a love that is rich with humility.

Both humility and love are integral to all human relationships that thrive. A good, close relationship depend upon both love and humility. The expression of one's love and humility are a powerful key to avoiding, and to solving, problems.

Yahweh is ever ready to help you to become converted into the humble and loving child He wants you to be. May Yahweh bless you with a deep understanding of this essential topic and grant you a heart of love and a purposeful dedication to a spirit of humble service. Amein.

- Elder Tom Shattke



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Following the Messiah

In John 12:26, the Messiah says, *If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.* (The **New American Standard Bible** is used throughout).

This idea of serving Him is understood in the context of a slave serving a master, doing what the master instructs him. This is essentially what Yahshua is saying to His disciples who are bond servants. They freely do what He says, because they know He speaks the truth and He is Truth (John 14:6) embodied through His actions (John 14:10).

What is Truth?

Pilate, when Yahshua came before him, asked, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). That is an easy question to answer from Scripture. We are told directly from both the Scriptures, and from the Messiah Himself,

- *Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth,* Psalm 119:142.
- *The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting,* Psalm 119:160.
- *Sanctify them (the disciples), taught ones in the truth; Your word is truth,* John 17:17.
- *Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of Elohim and that the word of Yahweh in your mouth is truth,”* 1 Kings 17:24.
- *Be diligent to present yourself approved to Elohim as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth,* 2 Timothy 2:15 (see also 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

When we consider that Yahshua did not do His own will, but His Who sent Him (John 5:30), we can understand more readily Who the Master truly is: The Perfect Sacrifice represented for us, so that we may be saved through His shed blood (Heb 9:22-24).

This is also the truth of Who He is, and what He means for us.

What is Sin?

When Yahshua healed and forgave, it was with the admonition of not continuing in sin. For example, to the woman caught in adultery, we read:

Straightening up, Yahshua said to her, “Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?” She said, “No one, Master.” And Yahshua said, “I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more,” John 8:10-11.

A second example comes to us from John 5 where we read of a sick man at the waters of the pool, at the area of the sheep gate, called Bethesda:

The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me.” Yahshua said to him, “Get up, pick up your pallet and walk.” Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and [began] to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on that day. So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, “It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet.” But he answered them, “He Who made me well was the One Who

said to me, 'Pick up [your] pallet and walk'." They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick up [your] pallet and walk'?" But the man who was healed did not know Who it was, for Yahshua had slipped away while there was a crowd in [that] place. Afterward Yahshua found him in the temple and said to him, "Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you." John 5:7-14.

Parenthetically, the other things we notice in this account, is that the Pharisaical Jews had added their own Talmudic law of not carrying a bed/mat on the Sabbath. They had other such rules and regulations that countermanded Yahweh's commandments (Matt. 15:1-9). Yahshua defied their traditions and kept Yahweh's laws, often pointing out their hypocrisies. (Read Matthew 23.) They were legalistic but we should obey Yahweh, as Law-abiding citizens of His Kingdom.

Sin is defined succinctly as breaking Yahweh's laws. *Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous,* 1 John 3:4-7.

Continue in Sin?

Obviously, we are not to continue disregarding Yahweh's instructions, since this is contrary to the salvational process we find laid out in Scripture. *The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of Elohim appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of Elohim practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of Elohim. By this the children of Elohim and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of Elohim, nor the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,* 1 John 3:8-11.

The Apostle Paul also followed Yahshua, teaching others not to continue in sin, saying, *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Messiah Yahshua have been baptized into His death?*

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with [Him] in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be [in the likeness] of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was impaled with [Him], in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. Now if we have died with Messiah, we believe that we shall also live with Him, Romans 6:1-8.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of Elohim is eternal life in Messiah Yahshua our Master, Romans 6:23.

From Ezekiel, we read:

The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself. But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live, Ezekiel 18:20-22.

Obviously, we do not want to continue in sin. We desire to do the Father's will, and not our own. This was Messiah's attitude, as well (Luke 22:42). Not only His attitude, but His teaching. *I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me,* John 5:30.

As we also seek the Father's will and are obedient to His laws, we are empowered to do what is right in His sight. Regrettably, some don't get it. Neither in the past, nor yet today!

Concerning Him (Yahshua) we have much to say, and [it is] hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of Elohim, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes [only] of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil, Hebrews 5:11-14.

Cleaning Ourselves Up!

A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher. Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye, Luke 6:40-42.

We have to start looking at ourselves and what we are doing. Are we living to the flesh, or living for Yahweh? Strong warnings are given to those who might think they can submit a little here, and a little there, to the flesh; who might think they need not put away their past, sinful ways and at the same time, be in good standing with the heavenly Father.

Nevertheless, this contrast between right and wrong has been proclaimed for thousands of years. For example, Jeremiah queries of Judah,

Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal and walk after other [so called] elohim that you have not known, then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My Name, and say, "We are delivered!"— that you may do all these abominations? Has this house, which is called by My Name, become a den of robbers in your sight? Behold, I, even I, have seen [it], declares Yahweh, Jeremiah 7:9-11.

This is the state of many first-day churches today, and, speaks as well, to their religious leaders which teach messages of grace and love, but who reject Yahweh's laws, ordinances, and statutes. We speak this as a warning to any who profess themselves worshipers of Yahweh, but who manifest themselves as liars because of living contrary to His way.

What happened to Israel and Judah – exiled in captivity to Assyria and Babylon, respectively – is recorded in the Scriptures for our learning and admonition, and serves as an exhortation not to do as they did and to incur the punishment they received.

Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED

“Are we living to the flesh or living for Yahweh?”

[Me] BY TESTING [Me], AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART, AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS'; AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST'." Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living Elohim. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is [still] called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Messiah, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, while it is said, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME." For who provoked [Him] when they

had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt [led] by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief, Hebrews 3:7-19.

Yahshua Warns of Consequences

In John 14:24 Yahshua says, *He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.*

And we live, not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the Father's mouth (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4). Nevertheless, the Father has chosen to work through the Son to bring us back to a right relationship with Him, that we might be with the Father and the Son – no longer, subject to a death penalty as a just retribution for sin.

To accentuate this life that we have in Messiah, we are told by the Master,

If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love, John 15:6-10. (See also Matthew 7:21-23.)

Yes, love, grace, faith – each compliments the other two, together with obedience to the Father and to the Son Who are in agreement. Yahshua's prayer is that we would also be in agreement with Them (John 17).

In all of this, Yahshua warns that our righteousness will have to surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees who knew the Law, but didn't observe It.

He says, *Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill (fill up, bring to fulness). For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches [them], he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses [that] of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven,* Matthew 5:17–20.

As we know, the Pharisees and a number of the scribes were self-righteous, hypocritical, and entertained greedy desires. Rather than being given over to humility, pride and a haughty spirit became their downfall and destruction (Prov. 16:18).

Weightier Matters of the Law

In Matthew, chapter 5, after declaring the efficacy of the Law, Yahshua then proceeds to magnify It according to a prophecy given to Isaiah:

Yahweh was pleased for His righteousness' sake to make the Law great and glorious. Isaiah 42:21. The **King James Version 1900** reads a little better saying, *Yahweh is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will magnify the Law, and make [It] honourable.*

The Messiah was purposed to “magnify the Law, and make It honourable.” With the Master magnifying and making Yahweh's Word great and glorious, also comes stringent warnings concerning Its transgression, In Matthew 5:21-22, *He said, You have heard that the ancients were told, “YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER” and “Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.” But I say to you “that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing’, shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool’, shall be guilty [enough to go] into the fiery hell,”* Matthew 5:21-22. (See also Leviticus

19:17-18; 1 John 3:14-15).

You have heard that it was said, “YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY;” but I say to you “that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell, Matthew 5:27–30.

The remainder of chapter 5 is concerned with Messiah's citing four more ordinances from the Torah – the letter of Which, He embellished with the spirit of man's observance.

Do we need to make further commentary? Does it sound much as if He had ‘done away with the Law’? Contrarily, it appears that He established the Law, and even magnified It.



When we obey from the heart, with Yahweh's Spirit in our lives, we are walking on higher ground. The Pharisees who did not have Yahweh's Spirit, had to be told about the weightier matters of the law (Matt. 23:23). We should not have to be told. We should automatically express and reflect Yahweh and Yahshua's loving and divine nature through our actions and attitude toward others, as well as among ourselves, willingly laying down our lives for one another without any hinderance or encumbrance preventing us from doing so (Luke 14:26-27; 33).

Love

When we talk about love, we consider loving Yahweh with all of our heart, strength, and being. Yahshua after all, proclaimed this is as the first and greatest commandment, with loving one's neighbor as himself as equivalent, yet secondary to the first.

Yahshua emphasized that Yahweh is Love, and we prove we are His disciples through expressing His Love to others, as He said:

For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what [more] are you doing [than] others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect, Matthew 5:46-48.

Prior to this, Yahshua spoke about loving our enemies. That is a tall order. It is against our human nature to love our enemies. After all, they don't love us! But that is not an excuse for us as we are to be a reflection of the divine nature of Yahweh. That nature is summed up in one word: Love.

Consider this: The Fruit of the Spirit proceeds from Its first attribute, Love (Gal. 5:22-23). The others automatically follow.

In John 13:34-35, Yahshua said to His disciples, *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

A new commandment does not necessarily negate previous ones. (Incidentally, this "new commandment" is particularly impactful when considering that He gave His life for us on the torture stake.

In John 15:12-17, Yahshua said to His disciples, *This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and [that] your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My Name He may give to you. This I command you, that you love one another. (See also Leviticus 19:18; 1 John 3:16.)

In Conclusion

Because of all the bad news in the world some news media are concluding their sullen reports with wholesome stories of acts of kindness. While negative news seem to prevail, we can offset these by making and magnifying heartwarming stories in our own communities and especially among ourselves.

The Messiah had disciples. He still has disciples. To certain in His day, He said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). He is likewise urging men today: "Follow Me!"

Then, His disciples had first to learn how to love, as Yahshua loved them. Once people saw their love – as they followed Him in laying down their own lives – they who had ears to hear and eyes to see were attracted to this 'lifestyle'. By this means, Messiah is known through those who follow Him.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given [them] to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch [them] out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are One, John 10:27-30.

- Elder David Brett

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Leadership of Men

We were asked recently if we had any literature on leadership skills for Elders and Deacons. While we don't have anything specific, we see the following as good guidelines: 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Beyond this, our ***Before and After Baptism*** may be helpful. However, Scripture does provide extra help in leadership skills for men. So we will take a look at a few of them along with 1 Timothy and Titus.

The main function of a leader is to serve and set an example. Yahshua is the Perfect One to follow and emulate. As the Apostle Paul said, Be imitators of me, as I am of Messiah. Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Messiah, 1 Corinthians 11:1-3 (***New American Standard*** used throughout).

As men, we will always have Messiah above us, therefore we must be sensitive to His leading us. We are to be sensitive to each other, especially our wives (as fellow heirs), in serving the Master (1 Pet. 3:7; Eph. 5:21) not being overbearing even to our children (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21).

Relationship Instructions

Apart from the "religious" men of His day, Yahshua was gentle with those with whom He dealt. His disciples witnessed this firsthand and were given Yahweh's Spirit to help us to relate well with others. *This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of Elohim,* James 1:19–20

*So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Messiah, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of Elohim that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as Elohim would have you; **not for shameful gain**, but eagerly; **not domineering** over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory,* 1 Peter 5:1-4.

Even younger men can set an example. Paul told Timothy, *Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity,* 1 Timothy 4:12.

Yahshua in Mark 9:35 affirms that being first requires one to have a servant's attitude. *And He sat down and called the twelve. And He said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."* To lead is to serve others, not to be served (Phil. 2:3, 5). We first serve Yahweh through Yahshua (John 12:26). This will make one a great leader (Matt. 20:26).

So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets, Matthew 7:12. Don't give a burden you are not yourself willing to take.

Safety in Much Council

Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety, Proverbs 11:14. The reality is even counselors can sometimes use counseling.

The brethren overall, can be of assistance, knowing who is in good standing and worthy of certain positions. *Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty,* Acts 6:3.

Worthy means to live by certain standards. The saying is trustworthy: *If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for Elohim's assembly?* 1 Timothy 3:1-16. Some are above reproach and already proven managers (1 Tim. 5:8).

Others are noted and chosen for certain skill sets, *Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of Elohim in my hand."* So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. *Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun,* Exodus 17:8-16.

Leaders sometimes need support, and humble ones will accept it. Even if we are confident and elegant in our ways, we can always improve.

Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of Yahweh. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Yahshua, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained to him the way of Elohim more accurately, Acts 18:24-26. We can always learn more than what we confidently already know.

Yahweh Provides

And Elohim has appointed in the assembly first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 1 Corinthians 12:28-29 (see also, Ephesians 4:11). We each have different gifts, and must rely on others to make up for our own weaknesses. But none of those weaknesses should have anything to do with sin.

But as servants of Elohim we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 2 Corinthians 6:4. If proud, be so because of your loss and not your gain. It can easily show how dedicated one is to stay the course and not deviate off the straight and narrow path.

Love to the End

To seek Yahweh's will and live it is the kind of love to which we should aspire. *Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love,* 1 Corinthians 16:13-14. There is no greater love than what Messiah did for us.

He [just as Yahshua] must hold firm to the trustworthy Word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it, Titus 1:9. Being steadfast in the Spirit of Yahweh and Yahshua, expressing Their love, is key to being a good leader.

- Elder David Brett



Love One Another

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another, John 13:34-35.

*This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends, John 15:12-13. (**English Standard Version** used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)*

How many believers would be willing eat something they knew contained pork? How many would cheerfully go off to work on the Sabbath?

Now for a hard question: How many would treat a brother or sister in the faith with anything less than the type of love we have already received from Yahshua? Probably, we all have in the past. But today is the day to change that!

Yahshua commanded us to love one another in the way that He loved us. What an assignment! The love Yahshua commanded in John 13 and in John 15 demands far more than we usually confer in human relationships. But if we obey the commandment Yahshua has given here, we will need to understand just what He is asking of us.

It's been said that we can pick our friends but not our family. For example: A married couple may not, at one time, have liked each other enough to even consider marriage with the other. But what may have started out as, "I wouldn't marry him or her, if he or she was the last person on earth" developed first as an acquaintance, afterward progressing into friendship and then perhaps marriage, which became an attractive idea to both the man and the woman.

Becoming a member of an Assembly is a lot like a marriage. There are some members whom we might not pick as brothers and sisters. That's alright though, because we aren't required to pick members of the fellowship of believers. In fact, according to what Yahshua affirmed to His disciples, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you ..." (John 15:16) ... And in His Gethsemane prayer, He acknowledge that of those whom His Father had given Him, He'd lost none except that one (Judas), the son of perdition, to fulfill the prophecy (John 17:12). Moreover, the Apostle Paul confirmed Yahshua's acknowledgment by saying that Yahweh has set the members, every one of them, in the Body, as it has pleased Him (1 Cor. 12:18).

And so, even though we did not pick or choose these, our brethren, we are nevertheless commanded to love them as Yahshua loves them. What does that mean? A + in every way. Our love for the brethren must be pure in heart, intelligently directed to the highest goals, and so vigorous in application that it involves the entire soul.

Old Testament Love

You shall love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might, Deuteronomy 6:5. Yahshua declared this as the first and great commandment (Matt. 22:38) and then cited Leviticus 19:18, which reads, *but you shall love your neighbor as yourself ...*”

Yahshua said that upon these two commandments, hinged all the Law and the prophets (Matt. 22:40). How great a love it is when we can love someone else as much as we love ourselves! That means we forgive them readily, give them the things they need without them asking and without thought of repayment, and support them in many other ways.

1 Corinthians 13 details many characteristics of this love. Who can love like that? What a challenge! Even this ancient command from the Torah seems to be more than we could ever naturally fulfill.

But Yahshua fulfilled this kind of love in His life on earth. The evangels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are a record of This Man’s great love:

In Matthew 9:36, when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Matthew 14:14 finds Him going forth, and seeing a great crowd, was moved with compassion toward them and healed their sick. In the 23rd chapter, he cries, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!* Matthew 23:37.

In His sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7), He amplified one law after another and emphasized one’s heart attitude toward obeying these commandments. He said,

- “Do not be angry,”
- “Do not look at a woman to lust after her,”
- “Do not stand up against someone who does you wrong,” and
- “Love your enemies ... do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you

He employed those principles to govern His own life. They represented the way He actually lived, and died ... imploring, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luke 23:34.

No Greater Love

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another, John 13:34-35.

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends, John 15:13.

Perhaps we could paraphrase these words, “Dedicate your life completely to improving the relationship of the brethren with Yahweh because you love them so much. That is what I am doing and that is what I command you to do. That is how people will know you really are learning from Me.”

It may be thought perhaps, that I may be taking liberty with this text, but I believe the Messiah would agree with this interpretation. After all, the law, the prophets, the writings ... and certainly, the evangels, are all directed toward getting people clean, pure and without sin so that they may draw near to Yahweh. Such is the purpose of the Son, to present a ‘purified’ creation to the Father; His goal, the consummation of perfecting those things lacking in a people’s faith.

Therefore, Yahshua did not give this commandment to “love one another as I have loved you” merely as a suggestion. Love motivated Him to give up His life for us (John 15:13) – not only in the sense that He died for us, but according to Isaiah 53, He was, for us, despised, disesteemed and rejected of men. A man of sorrows, He was acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes, we are healed. And all these He patiently endured, as a lamb brought to the slaughter and as a sheep, dumb before its shearers in order to bring all the brethren to the point where they could have a closer relationship with the Father. >



So, How Do We Prove Our Love?

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full, John 15:9-11. Such love as Yahshua commanded, seems to depend on one thing: obedience to His commandments – whatever, He has commanded us to do ... with the mind to do it 100%. As an incentive toward doing so, it will help to keep in mind that in so doing, we shall inherit a great position as kings and priests before Yahweh; as heirs, and joint heirs with Yahshua, as children of Almighty Yahweh, His Father and ours, too!

Yahshua's Example: A Challenge to Us

You call me Teacher and Master; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Master and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you, John 13:13-15.

Having become our example, Yahshua set Himself apart for Yahweh's purpose: *And for them I set Myself apart, so that they too might be set apart in truth,* John 17:19.

Just as Yahshua had not come to be served and ministered to but instead, to serve and to minister – even at an expense to ourselves, gladly spending and being spent; loving more abundantly though we should in return, be less loved (2 Cor. 12:15); bearing another's burden, and so fulfilling the law of Messiah (Gal. 6:2); comforting the feebleminded and supporting the weak (1 Thess. 5:14).

Yahshua prayed for those whom the Father had given Him, and also for us who would believe on Him through their word (John 17:20). Later, the Apostle Paul would, in a letter, tell Timothy, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

These understood Yahshua's teaching and passed it on, with instruction and encouragement. We might give ourselves to prayerful meditation upon what's been provided by their writings.

Looking to the Author and Finisher of faith, Yahshua, Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured execution on the tree, dismissing the shame, and assumed that seat at the right hand of the

throne of Yahweh (Heb. 12:2). Consider Him Who endured such hostility of sinners against Himself; Who yet resisted and strove against sin, to the point of shedding blood, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds (Heb. 12:3-4).

Yes, He left us an example, that we should become even as He: Executed with the Messiah, dying daily ... nevertheless, the life that is lived in this flesh, lived by the faith of the Son of Elohim, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me (1 Cor. 15:31; Gal. 2:20).

Conclusion

I pray, that from the treasures of His glory, that He will empower you with inner strength by His Spirit so that the Messiah may live in your hearts by faith. Also I pray that you will be rooted and founded in love, so that you, with all the saints, may be able to grasp the breadth, length, depth, and height of the Messiah's love, and to know it even though it passes knowing, that you might be filled with all the fullness of Elohim (Eph. 3:16, 19) and though found in fashion as a man, humbling yourselves, walking in love as the Messiah loved us, by becoming obedient to the death of the self, as it is written:

For you know the grace of our Master Yahshua the Messiah, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor; that through His poverty you might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9.

As we have seen, obedience to Yahshua's new commandment is not a light or easy thing to accomplish. It is difficult, but it is at the very heart of what it means to follow the Messiah. He said that others seeing our expressing this peculiar love is how they will know we follow Him. LOVE, the first and greatest of the nine Fruit of the Spirit.

Yahshua has given us the example, and the New Testament writers have given us instruction and encouragement and Yahweh, has made us able through His Spirit to obey this new commandment given us (John 13:34).

And so, now is the time to rededicate ourselves to obeying the master, following His example, and loving the brethren with all our heart and soul. Because He laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16).

Let that grouchy old man die and go forward with the loving spirit of our Messiah. Finally, brethren, *Be kind to one another; tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as Elohim in the Master forgave you,* Ephesians 4:32.

- Elder Tom Shattke

Problems Looking For a Solution



- Sitting in the urgent care facility with my knee wrapped in ice was not how I had planned to spend my day. Nevertheless, I was hopeful for a quick solution. Instead, I was told I needed surgery that would be followed with months of recovery. Now, after four years of recovery, I am still learning my limitations.
- When I suddenly became unemployed, I had no source of income and no immediate job prospects. I watched my savings shrink and my dreams disappear. I sank into overwhelming debt. I would lie at night while visions of bills paraded through my mind.
- The surgeon delivered bad news about my husband's health: "Two coronary arteries 80% blocked and lined with large deposits of plaque – triple bypass surgery and a valve replacement are necessary."
- As a healthy 16-year old, I never expected my doctor to diagnose me with anything serious, especially not a mental illness like depression. I had been struggling with "feeling down," always expecting to snap out of it, but over time it slowly got worse. I struggled with suicidal attempts. Life felt hopeless and empty. I felt as though Yahweh had finally given up on me, and I began to give up on myself.
- Since my parents' divorce when I was young, my father drifted farther and farther from me and my brother. I had no father figure in my life. My father was rarely true to his word. I saw him only when a visit was convenient for him. Eventually, he gave up his right to visitation.
- Some days, everything seems wrong and everywhere I go appears dismal. I notice dirt on the floor; smudges on the windowpanes; a new gray hair; traffic lights take too long to change; drivers are aggressive; and I have to avoid potholes – an endless list of stressors.
- The ambulance door was about to close – with me on the inside. Outside, my son was on the phone to my wife. From my concussed fog, I called his name. As he recalls the moment, I slowly said, "Tell your mom I love her very much."
- I cried for the first five years of my daughter's life. She had been alive for only eight months when she was diagnosed with Williams Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder characterized by growth delays. Though not life-threatening, the disorder can manifest in a spectrum of symptoms that range in severity. Her unknown future was extremely frightening for me.
- Several months after my college graduation, a few lumps formed in my neck. I had been sick and assumed my illness had caused my lymph nodes to swell, which is fairly common. But one day, I woke up with a 102-degree fever, and my dad took me to the hospital. After days of waiting and praying, I received a cancer diagnosis at age 24. My faith was shaken, and I felt shrouded in darkness.

Not all of these, our subjects, whose testimonies of trial, patience, faith, and hope are recorded in monthly devotional magazines, have experienced recovery and restoration or otherwise, yet had the petition they desired.

But a further read of their accounts reveals a confidence in, and a faith toward, Yahweh Who does not, because He need not, give any account of His matters, and that He is still Sovereign and that His will is accomplished through whatever means He purposes.

And their experiences with acute and chronic health issues, relationship issues, every day stress issues, trust-in-Yah issues, mirror those concerns about which we can read in the Scriptures – from Genesis to the Acts of the Apostles.

Some Biblical Examples

He'd waited twenty-five years for this moment – the promised birth of a son who had been foretold he should be the progenitor of a great nation, a peculiar people. Then, when the promised seed had grown to maturity, perhaps as old as 25 or even older, as some authorities conjecture, the elder was commanded to take his son, the son of his old age, and offer him as a burnt sacrifice. Staggering not at unbelief, he was strong in faith and, therefore, obedient. Fully persuaded that what Yahweh had promised, He was able also to perform, he built an altar, laid the wood in order, bound his son, and laid him upon the altar and atop the wood. Knife in hand, he stretched forth his hand ...

This same son, Isaac, married at the age of 40, and for 20 years, he and his wife Rebekah had tried to conceive a child. And when conception had occurred, Rebekah struggled during her pregnancy, wondering why if through her husband's seed, a chosen nation of people should proceed, she should have this trouble.

Though Rachel was Jacob's favorite of four wives – and maybe, just for that reason – she couldn't conceive of him, and finally, discouraged and depressed, she turned against her husband, exclaiming, "Give me children, or else I die" (Gen. 30:1) – unknowing that she was speaking prophetically, as she did die in childbirth (Gen. 35:16-20). (The King James Version used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)

Hannah, the second of two wives of Elkanah, was barren and reviled by the other, Peninnah who had given their husband sons and daughters. And her sorrow wasn't assuaged by her husband suggesting to her that he, was better to her than ten sons (1 Sam. 1:8). To make matters worse, Eli, the high priest, when he had seen her at the Tent of Meeting, accused her of being inebriated ... when all she was doing, was praying ... mouthing her petition from the abundance of her heart, but without giving voice (1 Sam. 1:13).

Naaman, the commander-in-chief of the Syrian army, was leprous, and it so happened that a maiden of Israel who attended his wife, suggested he retire to Israel to the prophet that was in Samaria (2 Kings 5:1-3). A letter of introduction is prepared and delivered to Jehoram, the son of wicked Ahab, who repulsed the petitioner, regarding his entreaty as a provocation to war. When the prophet Elisha heard of it, he sent his servant Gehazi to tell him to dip in the Jordan 7 times. Naaman is perturbed, that

(1) the prophet sent a messenger instead of coming himself, and (2) that he might have remained where he was and dipped in the rivers of Damascus, which he esteemed better than this muddy Jordan. He was about to learn, however, that neither his thoughts nor his ways were superior to Yahweh's thoughts and His ways. And besides, he needed to discover that there was a prophet in Israel.

These are but few of very many circumstances and situations recorded of experiences of real-life people in the Old Testament ... recorded for our learning, that

- that His will, accomplished through whatever means He purposes, is that people would, first of all, know that it is He, Who is the Potter and they, the clay ... and that He can do what He will with His own;
- that His will, accomplished through whatever means He purposes, is that people would come to contrite repentance and confession, that they could be forgiven, reconciled, and restored, and
- that His will, accomplished through whatever means He purposes, is that people would grow in grace and in knowledge of the Sovereign Savior, Yahshua the Messiah and that they, can do all things, and suffer all things, through Him Who strengthens them.

The Scriptures provide us with examples of others, too, who learned to possess their souls by patience.

Twelve years, she had suffered from hemophilia. During this time, she had consulted many physicians, spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. But then, she thought, "If I may touch but His clothes ..."

Then there was another, who'd suffered severe scoliosis for fourteen years ... so grievous, that she was bowed and could not even raise her head. Nevertheless, she was faithful in attendance on the Sabbath to her synagogue, where she should be rewarded for her constancy and steadfastness.

A third, making his habitation among a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, lived with his particular disease for 38 years until ... he was approached by a Man from Galilee, Who'd told him to "Behold, Thou art made whole ... Rise, take up thy bed, and walk ... sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." (John 5:14).

A fourth, a Phoenician woman – alien and stranger to the commonwealth and covenants of promise – yet, through her importunity, pressed This Man of Galilee, in behalf of a daughter grievously troubled by a demon ... oh, yeah, even to assigning to herself the stature of a dog who should eat of the crumbs falling from its master's table. So impressed was He, that He suspended his calling among His own (the lost sheep of Israel), that He rewarded her importunity.

A fifth, having been born blind, was supposed to have been so conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity, and was thus foreordained to live in darkness. Or, perhaps, it was his parents who had sinned, and their offspring was thus made to bear the recompense due their transgression. But scarcely, would it have occurred to any but the Master, that his blindness was the precursor to Yahweh being glorified as he who received sight, affirmed to his inquisitors

A sixth, was also selected to manifest the glory of Yahweh, and that the Son also, might be glorified. For the Record bears no such account that one, dead four days, his body now stinking for reason of decomposition, should be commanded to, "Come Forth" (John 11:43).

A seventh, having five times been scourged with thirty-nine lashes; three times, beaten with rods; once stoned; three times suffered shipwreck, a night and a day spent in the peril of the sea; and in perils at the hands of robbers, heathen, his own countrymen, and even among false brethren, whether in wilderness or city; experiencing weariness and pain, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, and perhaps the greatest of affliction and torment: The cares of a shepherd among unappreciative sheep upon whom he had bestowed much labor,

Oh, but time should fail us to tell of so many more who through faith in the midst of their several trials, nevertheless wrought righteousness and for their constancy of faith so pleased Him in Whom they trusted – whether or not, He should deliver them – and were commensurately rewarded by subduing kingdoms; stopped the mouths of lions; quenched the violence of fire; escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness, were made strong; waxed valiant in fight; turned to flight, the armies of aliens.

Others not accepting deliverance, endured torture and trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonment. Some were stoned, sawn asunder, slain by the sword or, having no certain dwelling place, wandered about destitute, afflicted, tormented in desert places, and in mountains, and dwelt in dens

and caves of the earth ... all the while, confessing and professing themselves strangers and pilgrims on the earth, declaring plainly that they were in search of a country, that is, an Heavenly and a City Whose Builder and Maker is Yahweh.

Ah, no! They wouldn't accept deliverance from their infirmity, necessity, distress, reproach or persecution ... choosing to suffer affliction, esteeming the reproach of Him with Whom it was enough they should be as He, rather than enjoying the pleasure of sin for the season of their mortality.

"Why," you ask? Because they'd counted all things of this temporal existence, but dung and loss for the recompense of the reward: A crown of righteousness and a throne, incorruptible and undefiled that would not, as the vapor of this temporal life, fade away – an eternity, incorruptible and undefiled, and prepared and reserved for them along with His commendation, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Sovereign" (Matt. 25:21).

"Why," you ask? Because they'd reckoned that the sufferings of this present time were but a light affliction and for a moment, scarcely worthy to be compared with the exceeding and eternal weight of glory which should afterward be revealed in them

And finally, Another, despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; despised and esteemed not, coming to His own but not received and in fact, was oppressed and afflicted; His visage marred ever more than any before or since, and destined to be numbered among the transgressors, though He had committed nothing worthy of such a death, was nevertheless, brought as a Lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.

"And why," you ask? Because for this cause He had come into the world; to this end He'd been born!

Maybe, just maybe, because there is no trial but such as is common to all, you can find your place among these whose short biographies of life experiences and testimonies – taken severally from devotional articles and the Record of Scripture – are provided us to prove the faithfulness of Yahweh Who makes a way in the wilderness of this world; a way of escape to redeem, save, deliver or sometimes, even ordaining the death of this mortal flesh that the being might be spared further physical and/or mental travail. So, go ahead! Find your place in the narrative, but know this: You have a choice.

You Have a Choice

In the words of George T. Wilkerson, “You can approach problems or stress in one of two ways: You can either compare yourself to the problem or stressor, or compare the problem or stressor to Yahweh” Who, incidentally, is bigger than any problem or stressor you could have.

Some have already discovered, or maybe presently discovering, that 'tis better and more rewarding in the end of a thing, to have committed, and to commit, their cause to Him. Nevertheless, you should not think you can assuage your temporal grief of mind and sorrow of heart by returning to the vomit and mire of a past that was sin-ridden and which may, in fact, have become the very reason contributing to whatever infirmity, necessity, or distress awarded you, to the end that you might awaken to righteousness and cease continuing in sin.

Following are three of several reasons why one is permitted to suffer in this mortal flesh:

- that the purpose of Yahweh may be manifest His glory in the sufferer who without regard to his present estate, patiently and without complaint, endures his affliction because of the Hope that is set before him and who considers his testimony of faith and hope should arouse the unbeliever and confirm and admonish the community of faith that “He That Hath Suffered In The Flesh Hath Ceased From Sin” (1 Peter 4:1), or
- to chastise one for his transgression, for it is better that his sin goes on before judgment than that it should follow after, or
- that he might learn obedience, seeing that no disciple or servant is above his lord or master, who suffers also in this life from the same infirmities, necessities, and distresses.

And 'tis better, much better, that one should not wait until he,

- as an ox goes to the slaughter, or
- as a fool to the correction of the stocks, or
- as a bird hastes to the snare, or
- as a dart strikes through his liver ... he knowing not, it is for his life, or
- that he is struck down to the earth on his particular road to Damascus, blind having need to be led by the hand to a street called Strait.

It could just be that there won't be, a deliverer, an Ananias awaiting you to put his hands on you,

and say, “Brother, the Master, even Yahshua, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightiest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:15) but instead, a certain just recompense meet for your error.

Remember this Word: Yahweh is not tempted ... no, He's just as apt to cut you off, dead in trespasses and sins, if dead in trespasses and sins has characterized your life. Judgment, after all, will signal the end of His mercy.

As a believer, purpose instead, to walk unto all pleasing, and worthy of the vocation whereto you've been called. For there is but one, and only one, portrait which characterizes a true-blue believer: He and she have both mortified the deeds of the flesh and reckoned themselves to be dead indeed to sin.

Indeed, ought we to receive the admonition, without having to require the alternative experience, of that which was spoken to one of our subjects: “Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee” (John 5:14).

The devil, however, will seize this moment when you think you cannot endure any longer to the end, whatever trial of your patience to work a stronger faith, to distract and to draw you away; to tempt and to entice you; so that you are beset by the devil's deception, unknowing ... and maybe, even uncaring to know, that you have but laid the groundwork by which you will become pierced through with many sorrows that could have been averted, before being drowned in perdition, then destruction.

The devil will tell you, that at any time, all you have to do is to confess yourself in a feigned contrite repentance, and that Yahweh is by His Word, bound to forgive, reconcile, and restore to you by His immeasurable grace and plenteous mercy because after all, His mercy is still rejoicing against His judgment which is deferred, and reserved, for all those who die as they had lived, dead in trespasses and sins.

All should have a lot of experience with death – spiritually, dying daily to yielding to sin. In Luke 21:36, a conclusion to an eschatological account preceding a great and notable day, Yahshua enjoined us to watch and to pray always, that we might be accounted worthy to escape such of those things that are reserved for that moment.

Few would consider that natural, physical death can, as well, be a way of escape from that moment ... if one might be found alive in Him. It would not very much occur to very many, that living this life

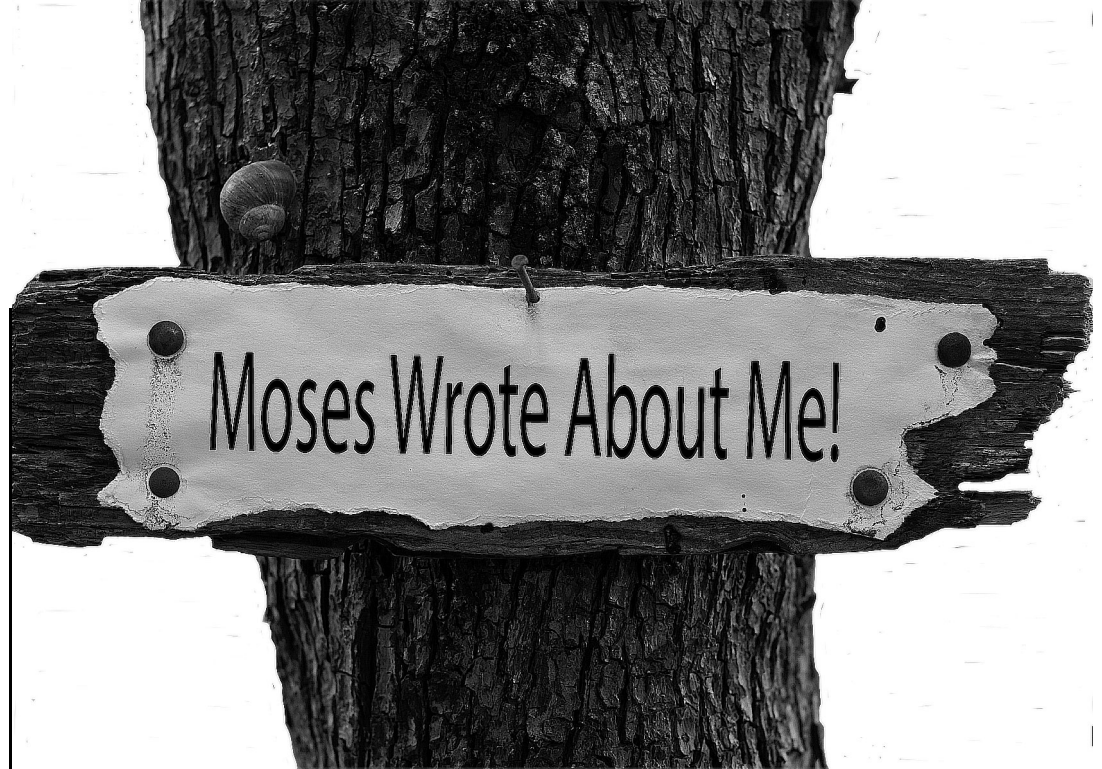
in real time is but preparatory toward that moment when we, too, will draw our last breath with a respiratory sigh. But one need not, and ought not, to wait until this moment to get right with Him, lest instead, he be left.

In order to be assured appointment to the first, better resurrection ... better, much better, to **decide, before you take that last ride** ... in a hearse, to the graveyard! Better, much better, now while it is yet a time accepted, to behold the day of salvation rather than risk that moment **where death finds you, there eternity may keep you!**

Harden not therefore, your heart, as in the day of provocation. For of that great and notable day, and of that hour knows no man. "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning ..." (Mark 13:35).

Neither say, "I will hear thee again of this matter;" nor, "When I have a convenient season, I will send for thee, ... lest when coming suddenly, He find you sleeping."

- Elder John W. Reece



It has been said, "The Law of Moses is dead, that it's been nailed to the tree." Let's consider the question, "As a believer in the Messiah, does my eternal salvation depend upon my understanding of the teachings of Moses?" Before answering consider the adage:

"The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed."

Let's think about that, while I cover just little bit of my background as it is pertinent to the article at hand.

A Little Background

In the fall of 1999, the Spirit of Yahweh visited me in the depths of poverty – not financial poverty, but spiritual. I sat in a pew in a Sunday-keeping "Signs and Wonders" church and I was content to live in this world. Happy to listen to the messages being given at the pulpit, I thought, "For certainly, the man standing there has formally studied the Bible and knows much more than I." After all, "it is his profession."

I was enamored with the worship team's "Spirit-filled" music being 'performed' there. I was willing to be "slain in the Spirit," and willing to participate in "Holy laughter." I didn't know I was impoverished, lying in the gutter of contentment; drinking from the bottle of false doctrine.

While I sat there in that pew, in the quiet fatigue at the end of another Sunday service, the Set-apart Spirit of Yahweh wrote three words on my heart: "Honor My Sabbath." It was written simply, gently, clearly, and powerfully.

It was written within me as if it had always been there. In that instant, it became a part of my personality, my belief system. I felt no need to resist its presence within me. The message burned inside of me with complete oxidation. I was energized, and from that point on, I set apart the Sabbath Day, from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, to do three things:

1. To search the Scripture,
2. To sing praises, and
3. To pray for continued strength to do the will of the Father.

First Impressions

The very first verse that was impressed upon me was Romans 3:4:

Let Yahweh be true and every man a liar.

The Spirit was telling me that I had to consider everything that I had been taught as the teachings of man. I now understood that I was to read the Word as the Truth. For the first time in my life, I read the Bible without the encumbrance of man's commentary. I began to realize that the Word in Scripture was different from words spoken at the pulpit.

I met with the pastor to explore these differences, and after three months, he finally became exasperated with me and said, "Don't read the Old Testament; it's only good for a few stories!"

Well, those were the last words he spoke to me. I couldn't go back. My wife, who at first considered that I might be having a mental breakdown, nevertheless listened to what I was learning from the Scripture.

She came to an understanding of the Truth that was being given to me, not by just believing me, but by searching the Scriptures herself. One morning, we woke up and looked at each other, and the same thought ran through our heads, as we exclaimed to one another, "You know, we can't go back."

We soon began looking for a congregation that preached the Truth of the Bible.

Making The Move

Well, here we are, having moved from Fresno, California, to Fulton, Missouri, and into a Bible-believing Assembly, where it seems to me that everyone here, is here, because they began reading Scripture to see what "It" had to say, instead of what mankind had to say, about the Truth.

Here we are ... where everyone is happy. There are no struggles, no pain, no controversy, no problems and absolutely no confusion, right? Not exactly. Besides the fact that Satan attacks those closest to the Truth, we struggle to understand ourselves, the



Scriptures, our spouses, our children and our very purpose in life with such questions as, "How can I serve the brethren more?" and "What does Yahweh desire from me?"

There is often pain – physical, emotional, spiritual. There is sometimes controversy – why? Because no two people experience the same thing in the same way. We have learned we must work to come to an agreement in the Assembly. We must have hope in Yahweh and pray He will manifest His Truth to those who trust in Him.

Back To The Question

Let's get back to the question, though. We need to talk about Moses – and the Law that came to us, through him, from Yahweh our Elohim.

We need to ask, "As a believer in Yahshua the Messiah, does my eternal salvation depend upon my understanding of the teachings of Moses?"

There are a number of verses in Scripture that are among my favorites, because they have opened my eyes AND dropped my jaw! An amazing thing happened when I decided to read the Scripture without the encumbrance and burden of the teachings of men. I became amazed with what the Bible actually SAID! For example: Yahshua, speaking of the Law of Moses, says in John 5:47, *But if you do not believe his writings, HOW will you believe My words? NASB.*

HOW must we come to understand the Messiah? Through reading the Law of Moses! Yahshua confirms this in verse 46 of the same chapter, “for he wrote about Me.” Now, this is easily cast aside or glossed over if one has been taught that the Law is dead. “Oh, He was speaking to the Jews.” But, if one disregards the teachings of Churchianity as far as the Law is concerned, the Light of Truth will begin to shine. Let me demonstrate what I mean by looking at a passage that is often used to malign the Law of Moses.

Romans 3:21-24 says,

*But now the righteousness of Elohim without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of Elohim [which is] by faith of Yahshua the Messiah unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of Elohim; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Yahshua the Messiah, **KJV**.*

Mainstream Teachings

As you have probably been taught, according to these verses, “all one has to do to be saved is believe,” right? After all, as they say, “the Law is dead and we are free to worship as we see fit. It’s all about freedom ... that’s what it says right here, that without the law, the righteousness of Yahweh is manifested by just having faith in Yahshua the Messiah!”

That’s what it may look like to someone who, in speaking contemporary English, reads the English of medieval times. But ironically, that interpretation is completely contrary to what the author is actually saying.

In the phrase, “without the Law,” the English word in question here is, “without.” It is the Greek word “*choris*”, **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance**, G5565, which means, “at a space” or “apart from” in the sense of an “empty expanse” between two objects.

It does NOT mean “excluding.” The Apostle Paul here, is making a comparison.

No Depth Without The Law

Try this sometime just to see what the word really means: put a patch over one eye and drive in the 5:00 Friday traffic of Los Angeles or some other big city. (Don’t do that.) But, now imagine doing it with both eyes open. What’s the difference? With ONE eye, you’re dead – there’s no depth perception. With BOTH eyes open, you live! This DIFFERENCE is



what I think Paul is trying to show us.

We were given two eyes for providing us with depth in our perception of what is seen. Having the Law and ALSO having the Messiah, improves our vision toward life. The TWO give us DEPTH, enabling us to SEE clearly.

If Paul were trying to exclude the law, he might easily have used the word, “*Ekkleisai*” [**Strong’s** G1576], which means “to exclude.”

Compare *Ekkleisai* to *Ekklesia*, G1577, the “called-out ones,” separated and excluded from the world. The word “*choris*” – “at a space” or “apart from” in the sense of an “empty expanse” between two objects – on the other hand, holds a completely different meaning.

Paul is calling attention to the fact that the Law and the Prophets spoke of the Messiah and that now, we have seen Him who IS the Messiah manifesting His power among us. We used to have ONLY the Law and the Prophets as ONE witness of our salvation. But now, we have TWO – the Law (including the Prophets and the Writings) AND the Messiah Himself.

Using this understanding, the second half of Romans 3:21 makes sense. “The righteousness of Elohim as *evidenced BY the Law*, is MANIFESTED, being witnessed by the Law and the prophets.” The Law is manifested in the Messiah, a picture which Paul paints so eloquently.

It’s beautiful! Paul SURROUNDS the Messiah, textually speaking, with the Law. “The righteousness of Elohim as evidenced BY the Law, is

MANIFESTED, being witnessed by the Law and the prophets.”

Now, how confusing is it to validate something by something you’ve just invalidated?

Let’s think about that. That’s what one would have to believe if the Law and the Prophets were excluded, as some teach the meaning of this verse.

Let’s read the verse again:

“But now the righteousness of Elohim without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the prophets.”

What? The Law is a witness against itself? It’s the same circular argument that was used in the 1960’s TV space science fiction story to destroy the evil computer. Remember? Captain Kirk [whose name, incidentally, is the transliterated word for the Greek circe, from which comes the word, “church!”] spoke to the computer, “Everything I say is the truth. My first statement is a lie.” The computer self-destructs, trying to make sense of Kirk’s retraction! The same thing will happen to us, if we don’t understand the Law. If you do not believe Moses’ writings, HOW will you believe Yahshua’s words? Paul summarizes this discussion 7 verses later:

Do we, then, nullify the Law by this faith? Certainly not! Not at all! Rather we uphold the Law, Romans 3:31, NIV.

Paul never, ever abandoned the Law of Yahweh, preached to us through Moses. He knew, as we should, that without the Law, there simply is no Messiah! In fact, Yahshua IS the Law.

Understanding this one principle opens one’s understanding to much Scripture. For example, the Bible teaches that “Sin is lawlessness,” (1 John 3:4), the Breaking of Yahweh’s Law.

Sin, therefore, is not having the Messiah, Yahshua, the Word, and His Law, in our hearts.

New Covenant and More Depth

We call the teachings concerning the Messiah, “the New Testament,” or, as Yahshua refers to this portion of the Word, “the New Covenant.” Now, with understanding, Jeremiah 31:31-34 makes monumental sense:

“Behold, the days are coming,” declares Yahweh, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I

“Behold, the days are coming,” declares Yahweh, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant that they broke, though I was their husband,” declares Yahweh.”

- Jeremiah 31:31-32

took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant that they broke, though I was their husband,” declares Yahweh. “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares Yahweh: “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know Yahweh,’ for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares Yahweh. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more,” ESV.

Understanding Who the Messiah is, and the connection between the Messiah and the Law of Moses, lifts the veil from one’s eyes. It was for this reason, that the author

of the Book of Hebrews referred to Yahshua’s body as the veil hanging in front of the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Yahweh; and when the Savior’s body was torn, so was this veil, giving us access to the Spirit of Yahweh, to those who understand ... and believe (Heb. 10:18-22).

In John 5:43-47, we find Yahshua speaking to some of the Jewish leaders at Jerusalem:

“I have come in My Father’s Name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How CAN you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the [One and] Only Elohim? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, HOW will you believe My words?” NASB.

What is Yahshua saying here? How will you believe “My words” if you don’t understand “the Law,” as given to you by “Moses?” Can’t you see “Me,” in the “Law?” Yahshua is saying that He is in the Law. In fact, He IS the Law!

John 1:1-2 says, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Yahweh, and the Word was Elohim. The Same was in the beginning was with Elohim, KJV.*

Let us re-read that verse, using some of the Greek words in the text: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with *tón* Theon, and the Word was *theos*. He was with *tón* Theon in the beginning.”

When the Greek word *theos*, G2316, is preceded by the Greek word *tón*, G3588, it is referring to the “supreme Divinity,” whose name is Yahweh, the Heavenly Father. Without that article, [which in English is equivalent to the word “the,” it means, “a deity” – a mighty One. John is saying that Yahshua was the “Word” – the Law, that He IS Elohim and that He was WITH Yahweh in the beginning.

John 1:45 says, *Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and [also] the Prophets wrote, Yahshua of Nazareth, the son of Joseph,” NASB.*

In Luke 16:30-31, Yahshua speaks a parable about “a certain rich man,” who was relying on salvation through his ancestral connection to Abraham. This “certain rich man” died and lay in torment, looking *And he said, “No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.” He said to him, “If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead,” ESV.*

In Luke 24:27, we read Yahshua speaking to two of His disciples, after having risen from the grave:

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself,” NIV.

Foundational Teachings

What Moses taught is foundational to understanding the Messiah. Yahshua did not quote from the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the Epistles of Paul, James, Peter, John, or Jude or the Revelation of Yahshua Messiah.

Why? Well, they hadn’t been written yet! There was no need to read from these Sacred Texts. Everything we need to know is in the Old Testament!

Speaking of Yahshua, *He said to them, “These [are] the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses and [in] the Prophets and [in] the Psalms, concerning Me.” Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, Luke 24:44-45, KJV.*

And what Scriptures might these be? The same Scriptures the Bereans used to test whether or not Paul was speaking the Truth when he preached to them about Yahshua the Messiah; the same Scriptures Paul referenced in his letter to Timothy, in 2 Timothy 3:15: *and from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Messiah Yahshua, NIV;* the same Scriptures Peter referenced in 1st Peter 1:1-2, when he wrote, *to Yahweh’s elect,*

strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, [in other words, to us] who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of Yahweh the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Yahshua the Messiah and sprinkling by His blood, NIV.

Of this age, as in times past, Peter observed of some who are either dull of hearing or willingly ignorant, saying, of his apostolic peer, *He [speaking of Paul] writes the same way in all his letters [academic teachings], as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction,” 2 Peter 3:16, NASB.* In other words, they who do not know the Law, and/or are confused about the Law, *distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction ... speaking evil of things which they neither understand, nor know (2 Pet. 2:12; Jude 1:10) – the rest of the Scriptures? none other than the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings of the Old Testament.* It shouldn’t be dismissed either, that Peter is as much declaring that the writings of the Apostles are equivalent to what was written as holy men of old were moved upon by the Holy.

Consider what is being presented to you today, and don’t believe a word of what’s written here if it’s not in agreement with Yahweh’s teachings.

In Paul’s words in Romans 3:4, “Let Yahweh be true and every man a liar.” Be as a Berean; test everything; go to the Scriptures.

Read the Law of Moses, not just in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, as well. There is some Truth in the adage, “The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.”

It is confirmed in Scripture that not all of what you have been taught is of Yahweh or His Savior, Yahshua Messiah.

You have received, in the past, teachings that are of the imaginations of men, some well-meaning; and some deceived by tradition, self-gain and ignorance.

This is my prayer, and I hope it will be yours, too: “May we be diligent in our study of Your Word, in order to present ourselves to You, Yahweh, and obtain Your approval, workers who do not need to be ashamed, having rightly divided the Word of Truth. In Yahshua’s Name, HalleluYah!”

- Elder John Fisher (deceased)



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q What Bible do you recommend? Is there just one I should get that is close to the truth?

A *Every Word of Elohim is tested. He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him, Proverbs 20:5.*

When it comes to the Bible, we have recommended that a person have more than one translation. Two of the more prevalent ones today are the **King James Version (KJV)** and also the **New American Standard Bible (NASB)**.

Two main manuscripts are referenced by scholars. One is the **Textus Receptus**, also called the **Received Text**, hailing from the ancient Antioch congregation in Turkey (Asia Minor), and upon which the **KJV** is based. The other source on which the **NASB** is based is the **Critical Text** or alternately referenced as the **Sinaitic Text** or **Vaticanus Text**. These are received from Alexandria, Egypt.

The problem we face today, is that there are no original extant copies of the Bible. However, this does not diminish the authority of the copies we have today. For example, the **Dead Sea Scrolls** provide us with a mostly-intact Isaiah scroll that predates either one of the **Textus Receptus** and the **Sinaitic Text** by at least 1,000 years. It is letter for letter, word for word, accurate to what we have today in most Bible translations. Nevertheless, and apart from the texts corroborating the more ancient finds, there are some things that have crept into modern versions, such as the replacement of Yahweh's Name with titles and scribal notes that promote false doctrine of the Trinity. Most "scholars" don't talk much about these admissions into contemporary translations because they believe in the same errors. (See our booklet, **The Truth about the Trinity**).

Because no translation is perfect – neither the **KJV**, neither the **NASB** – it's incumbent upon us to search out the Truth and to expose the error. For this reason, we recommend different translations.

Comparing various texts enable us to come to a better understanding of what Yahweh through His Spirit wants to reveal to His people.

Of interest, moreover, is that the New Testament has been translated from koine Greek and not Hebrew or Aramaic, original languages in which we believe the New Testament was penned. (See our in-depth studies, **Was the New Testament Originally Greek?**, and **Hebrew/Aramaic Origins of the New Testament**).

One might wonder why Yahweh wouldn't have provided us the New Testament in the autographed originals. Perhaps because the Greek language is more precise than the Semitic (Hebrew/Aramaic) languages. Semitic words generally have more than one meaning, which Greek words usually supply specific meanings. Yahweh, in His wisdom, may have permitted the New Testament to be handed to us in our vernacular translated from the Greek because He wants us not to be encumbered with words that could produce doubtful disputations. (See our **Fundamentals of Faith**).

We have enough for salvation with which to grow and become prepared for the Messiah's return.

Q Can you tell me if the Rotherham Bible is worth having?

A The Rotherham Bible is just one of the older "Christian" Bibles in which scholars "restored" the Name, Yahweh, to the Old Testament, but omitted replacing the false titles and names with the Sacred Names of Yahweh and Yahshua in the New Testament.

Those who recognize the salvation aspects of the Father and Son's Names have corrected the use of false titles and Names in both the Old and New Testaments. In our opinion, the best Study Bible today, is the **Restoration Study Bible** published by Yahweh's Restoration Ministry of Holts Summit, Missouri.





Q If the nation of Israel returned to the laws of Yahweh today would not Yahweh defend them today, like days of old?

A Nearly the entire book of Zechariah shows a heartfelt turning to Yahweh, as also revealed in Malachi 3:16 where a scroll will be written of the turning of a people to Yahweh at the end of the age. (Is this the final chapter [29] in the book of Acts?) There are promises of protection and blessings upon His people.

*If My people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land, 2 Chronicles 7:14, **KJV 1900.***

*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of Yahweh, He is my refuge and my fortress: my Elohim; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence, **KJV 1900.***

It should also be mentioned that today, we are healed by the stripes Messiah received on our behalf (Isa. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:4).

Q Is it okay to observe Purim?

A Purim is found in the book of Esther, in chapter nine, a celebration and memorial of how Yahweh turned things around on Haman's head who wanted to destroy Mordecai and the Jewish nation. It is noteworthy to point out that it was "a custom for themselves ... according to *their* regulation ... according to *their* appointed time" (Est. 9:27, **NASB**).

Today, we find national holidays from different nations. Just as the Chinese don't observe

Thanksgiving, Americans don't observe Purim. However, Americans in China may observe Thanksgiving, just as Jews in America may observe Purim.

It's important to point out that Jews are often identified as Israel, but they are only one of twelve noted anciently in the promised land in the South. The Northern tribes, making up most of Israel, were dispersed through Assyria a little more than a century before Judah went into Babylonian captivity around 600 B.C.E. The book of Esther is placed around a century later, under the Persian Empire.

With that said, there are 12 tribes of Israel, having descended from the 12 sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Jacob is the son of Isaac, the son of the promise that Abraham and Sarah had in their old age. It is through Isaac, Jacob, and his 12 sons through whom we find the promises of Yahweh fulfilled. Those, and any who will join with them (Exod. 12:49; Num 15:15-16). (Read our free mini-study entitled, ***The Hope of Israel.***)

While one may want to become a Jew, it is not a necessary prerequisite to being saved. Our faith in Yahshua is reckoned us toward righteousness, and we are, therefore, no longer strangers from the covenants of promise and the commonwealth of Israel (Eph. 2:12), but are grafted into the Olive Tree (Rom. 11:17), which is identified as all of Israel (Jer. 11:16-17).

Out of fear, many Persians converted to Jews at the time of Esther (Est. 6:13, 8:17). But today, converting to Judaism would mean adopting many traditions not sanctioned in the Bible. We should not be identified as either Christians or Jews, but rather as followers of "The Way" (Acts 9:2); relinquishing traditions of Jewry and of Christianity that are taught for commandment and the doctrine of Elohim (Matt. 15: 3, 6, 9), but which find nothing of support from Scripture; obeying the Law (*Torah*) of Yahweh, and receiving the salvation and deliverance of Yahweh through Yahshua. (Read our in-depth studies entitled, ***Orthodox Believers*** and ***What Happened to Christianity?***)

More Questions and Answers and over 100 studies are available for viewing online @ yaiy.org.
Contact us if you have other Biblical questions.

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- 1 Corinthians 5:7b

