

Restoration of



TORAH
ministries

The Restoration of Torah
by Tony Robinson

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INTRODUCTION

Since my earliest days as a believer I've always felt a special closeness with the Jewish people. I was blessed to be part of a congregation which understood that Israel continued to hold a special place in the redemptive plan of Adonai. In 1999 the Holy Spirit led me to search more diligently into the Hebraic roots of my Christian faith. Specifically, I felt led to understand the feasts. I knew that in many ways they were symbolic shadows of Adonai's redemptive plan and that they taught about Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ). I believe two other recent events influenced my decision to search the Scriptures.

At that time the elders (of which I was one) of our congregation desired to implement a more Scripturally accurate model for receiving the Lord's Supper (communion). We studied numerous Scriptures that Christians normally use to show how the Lord's Supper should be taken. We decided to implement a model based on our understanding of those Scriptures. The Lord also impressed upon our pastor (and myself too) the necessity of worshiping Yeshua in spirit and in truth. About this time I was able to introduce a new song to our congregation called *The Heart of Worship*. A portion of the lyrics is as follows:

*I'll give you more than a song, for a song in itself, is not what you have desired
You search much deeper within, through the way things appear
You're looking into my heart
I'm coming back to a heart of worship, and it's all about You, all about You, Jesus*

Many in our congregation, especially our pastor, were deeply touched by the song. It became the basis of some of his sermons in the following weeks. For truly worship is more than singing songs about loving the Lord. It touched me also. It reminds me of Romans 12:1-2 which states that true worship occurs when we yield up our bodies as living sacrifices.

Thus, my search to understand the biblical feasts and the Lord's Supper, along with the prayer for a true heart of worship, led me to the Internet to examine what my Messianic brothers had to say. I knew very little about Messianic believers, but I knew I could find information about them on the Internet. So, I performed a search and began to read what various Messianic ministries had to say about the feasts, the Lord's Supper, and many other subjects.

One of the first articles I found discussed whether or not Sunday should be recognized as the Christian Sabbath. Immediately I was confronted with a different point of view. Using the same Scriptures that I had examined a month earlier (during my study on the Lord's Supper), the

author proceeded to paint a totally different picture about the Lord's Supper. I had to admit that the author's conclusions were probably founded more in truth than mine were. In fact, I was so surprised at his conclusions, I quickly read articles on other subjects such as Replacement Theology, Law vs. Grace, Sabbaths, The Old and New Covenants, etc. After a few hours of getting a "thumbnail sketch" of Messianic doctrine, I saw that a great challenge loomed ahead. One by one I discovered that what I'd believed and thought about those doctrines may have been built upon wrong interpretations, translations and traditions handed down from previous Church generations. I decided to do a more thorough and systematic study of the various doctrines I'd believed as a Christian for the past 20 years. Furthermore, I decided to be a Berean and search the Scriptures to see whether or not the information I read was true. I decided to lay down my doctrine, my presuppositions, and my Christian worldview and with all humility take the position of a learner. In other words, I did not posture myself to read what my Messianic brothers had to say in order to gun down their arguments. After all, they are my brothers in the faith. I came to their teachings to learn--to learn whether or not their doctrines were founded in truth. The more I read, the more convicted I became about so many issues. The Holy Spirit opened my eyes to see the Scriptures as never before. This book is a summary of what our Father has taught me as I "humbly sat at my Messianic brothers' feet," to hear what He has taught them. I decided at the beginning of the study to allow the Lord to break down any false doctrine or wrong ideas, and He truly has.

I would like to summarize what I learned during those months of study.

- I believe the Scriptures clearly teach that Gentile believers become *Israelites* through their faith in Yeshua the Messiah. In doing so, *Gentiles become engrafted into the olive tree of Israel* where we are to partake of nourishment from the Israelite root. Furthermore, it was never Adonai's intention for Gentiles to become separated from their Hebraic roots to form "Gentile Christianity" apart from Messianic Jews. We were to be ONE in Him.
- I believe the Scriptures clearly teach that the New Covenant was made with "the House of Judah and the House of Israel" and not with a separate Gentile entity. The Scriptures do not even recognize an entity called the Church composed of Gentiles (with their own system of worship) apart from Messianic believers.
- I believe the Scriptures clearly teach that the Old Covenant Law (Torah) is still to be obeyed and was not abolished as is currently taught in Christianity. The Torah is an eternal, conditional (on the part of the people, not Adonai) covenant with Israel. The Torah was broken by Israel. Adonai established a New (actually Renewed) Covenant with Israel, *which still has as its basis the Torah, Prophets and Writings (the Tanakh)*. Whereas the Old Covenant was based on the written letter of the Torah, the Renewed Covenant is based on the Holy Spirit writing the Torah on the hearts of Adonai's people.

Before showing you from the Scriptures why I've made the three assertions listed above, I'd like to ask the following question. If you were alive when Yeshua ministered, would you have stumbled at His teaching (new wine) or would you have had the proper wineskin to accept the new wine He was pouring out? Think about it. It's easy to say yes until you consider that He did many, many things that *seemed* to contradict the Jewish worldview of the time. He was truly a stumbling block. He offended many people with His *new wine*. That's partly why He was rejected. Still think you wouldn't have stumbled? Consider this.

At one point Yeshua had to tell the Jews that *He didn't come to destroy the Torah and the Prophets*. In other words, He was telling them that He wasn't some new "cult leader" trying to draw people away from worship of the one and only true Elohim (God) of the Torah. You see, that's what many people thought (especially the Jewish leaders). Have you ever wondered why Yeshua had to make that statement? He made it because 1) His actions and teachings *did not fit the Jewish man-made traditions or theology of His day*, and 2) He did things that *seemed to contradict* their most sacred beliefs concerning the Torah. For example:

1. Yeshua did many things on the Sabbath that caused the Jews to think He was breaking the Sabbath laws.
2. He made claims that He was equal with Adonai, thus offending the Jews' understanding that there was only one Elohim (God).
3. He caused many disciples to leave Him when He told them that to be His disciples they had to eat His flesh and drink His blood.
4. The Jews expected a ruling, conquering king to overthrow Roman domination, but He came as a suffering servant.
5. He claimed to be the Messiah; however, people knew his earthly heritage and many even thought He was illegitimate.
6. His teaching on the Sermon on the Mount was seemingly "different" from the Mosaic Law (Torah).
7. He taught that the Kingdom of God was within you (initially), whereas all of the Jews eagerly expected the literal, visible, earthly rule of Adonai's Kingdom to come at any moment.
8. People were very confused by Him since *He didn't seem to obey or follow* the Mosaic Law (Torah) (as they thought He should), neither did He fit their expectations. People felt that His doctrine was so subversive to what they'd been taught that they tried to see if He would at least agree that the woman caught in adultery needed to be stoned as stated in the Torah! Surprise again.

On and on. Everywhere He turned He demolished their stereotypes and preconceptions. No wonder they rejected Him. Yeshua was truly an offense to many Jews of His day. If you had seen Yeshua "break" many of the commandments that you had been taught, would you have rejected Him too? Think about it.

The point I'm trying to make is this. At Yeshua's first coming, His *apparently* new doctrines didn't fit the theology of many of the Jews, especially the leaders. So much so that ***He had to make it clear to them that He hadn't come to destroy the Torah and the Prophets***. The majority of the Jews missed it. They stumbled at the stone. They were offended in Him. I have a question. Is it possible that right before His Second Coming that we as Gentile Christians could somehow stumble? The Jews had developed all of their doctrines and beliefs concerning the coming of the Messiah and were waiting expectantly for His appearance. But what happened? He appeared and the majority of Judaism didn't recognize Him! For it was Yeshua who said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace--but now it is hidden from your eyes (Luke 19:42)."

Has human nature changed? Do we really think it will be different for us at His second coming? Since human nature is so predictable, how many doctrines and commandments of men do we think have been developed and handed down within Gentile Christianity that could cause us to stumble after we've been confronted with "new wine"? The information I'm about to present may offend many. It is not an easy doctrine. However, I have wrestled with it for three months now and I'm convinced that Adonai has spoken clearly by His Holy Spirit. First, I'd like to develop the following premise. The original calling for Adonai's called out ones was to be one body where *Gentiles and Jews lived their faith together*. When Gentile Christians left the original calling to be *in union with their Jewish brothers*, they left an Adonai-given source of truth and fell victim to deceptions of "the commandments and doctrines of men."

A BRIEF SURVEY OF EARLY CHURCH HISTORY

The New Covenant Church spread through the known world with the blood of the martyrs as its seed. For brevity I will not recount the New Covenant passages that show how the world was turned upside down by the preaching of Peter, Paul and the early believers. I offer the following brief history of the Church from the time after the apostles died until about the 1500s. These statements are easily verified in Church history books and in the writings of the early Church Fathers.

Soon after the apostles died (and even while they were still alive) the adversary began sowing seeds that would cause the Gentile believers to separate from the Messianic believers. This can be demonstrated simply by noting that the early Church Fathers began to introduce *anti-Semitic doctrines and practices*. Some of these men were even contemporaries of the Apostles! First, Israel's birthright as Adonai's chosen people was stolen. The so-called Epistle of Barnabas (dated late first century or early second) spiritualized the Torah, claiming that it only prefigured Messiah and the Church: "Do not add to your sins and say that the covenant is both theirs and ours. Yes! It is ours; but they thus lost it forever." One of the most eloquent Church Fathers, John Chrysostom (344-407), whose name means "golden mouth," denounced the Jews in the strongest language: "...most miserable of all men...lustful, rapacious, greedy, perfidious bandits...inveterate murderers, destroyers, men possessed by the devil...debauchery and drunkenness have given them the manners of the pig and the lusty goat...pests of the universe...they have surpassed the ferocity of wild beasts, for they murder their offspring."

From as early as the second century men in the Church began to *repress the Hebraic influence of the New Covenant and teach anti-Semitic doctrines*. I offer a few selected quotes from some of the early Church Fathers and teachings.

1. Here are three canons from the Council of Laodicea (Fourth century):
 - **Canon 29.** "Christians must *not judaize by resting on the Sabbath*, but must work on that day, rather honoring the Lord's Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. *But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.*"
 - **Canon 37.** "It is not lawful to receive portions sent from the feasts of *Jews* or heretics, nor to feast together with them."
 - **Canon 38.** "It is not lawful to receive unleavened bread *from the Jews*, nor to be partakers of their impiety."
2. In *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew*, Justin Martyr emphasized that what had previously belonged to Israel was now the property of Christians. The Jewish Scriptures were a central part of this transference. They are "not yours but ours," Justin stated emphatically to Trypho. That is, the Church has replaced Israel as Adonai's children and Adonai's people. Here's a direct quote from Justin Martyr: "For *the law promulgated on Horeb is now old*, and belongs to yourselves alone; but *this [New Covenant] is for all universally*. Now, law placed against law has abrogated that which is before it, and a covenant which comes after in like *manner has put an end to the previous one*; and an eternal and final

law--namely, Christ--has been given to us, and the covenant is trustworthy, after which there shall be no law, no commandment, no ordinance.”

3. Jerome (author of the Latin Vulgate) and Augustine called Jews “accursed by God.”
4. Ignatius, third bishop of Antioch, said that “Christianity did not base its faith on Judaism; but Judaism on Christianity.”
5. In 339 AD, it was considered a criminal offense to convert to Judaism.
6. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, Italy, praised the burning of a synagogue, as an act pleasing to God.
7. Tertullian and Origen called the Jews “Christ killers” and “deicides (God-killers).”
8. The most influential Roman Catholic theologian, Augustine, called Jews “sons of Satan.” Augustine was highly influenced by Marcion, a heretic who called Adonai “an evil god” and who claimed He was not the Father of Yeshua.

Their teachings flourished and took root within the hearts and minds of the early Gentile believers. Until the time of Constantine, Christians had suffered many persecutions. However, after Constantine won the battle of the Milvian Bridge he issued the Edict of Milan in 313 AD. Although this edict did not make Christianity the official religion of the empire, he claimed to be a Christian, put an end to Christian persecutions and put Christianity on an equal footing before the law with other religions of the empire. Furthermore, Constantine showered favors upon the Church. He granted large sums of money, and erected magnificent Church buildings in numerous places (Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Constantinople and other places) and granted many other privileges. With a sitting Emperor confessing Christianity, it was no longer a shame to be a Christian. Now, being a Christian could even secure great material and social advantages such as political, military and social promotion. As a result many heathens and pagans entered the Church. Of course they brought their pagan influences with them. Because of the deepening spiritual vacuum of humble leadership in the Church of the Western Roman Empire, the Church leaders were more than happy to pacify the heathens by allowing them to continue their pagan practices in the name of Christianity. As a result the heathens brought into the Church numerous unscriptural practices and “*doctrines of men,*” which superceded the word of Adonai and brought further corruption and apostasy into the Church. Obviously, throughout Church history Adonai has always had a remnant of truly faithful followers. But they were always the minority and always persecuted. At the same time theology was translated into government policy by Constantine.

The final example of anti-Semitic teachings pertains to Martin Luther. Martin Luther (1483-1546) originally favored the Jews in the hope that they would accept his form of the faith, even praising their contribution to Christianity. However, most people aren’t aware that later in his life when he did not succeed in converting the Jews his attitude towards them changed dramatically. The following are quotes taken from Martin Luther’s *Concerning the Jews and Their Lies* (published 1542).

- “The rabbis should be forbidden to continue teaching the Law.”
- “Therefore be on your guard against the Jews, knowing that wherever they have their synagogues, nothing is found but a den of devils in which sheer self-glory, conceit, lies, blasphemy, and defaming of God and men are practiced most maliciously and vehemingly on them.”

- “I brief, dear princes and lords, those of you who have Jews under your rule--if my counsel does not please you, find better advice, so that you and we all can be rid of the unbearable, devilish burden of the Jews, lest we become guilty sharers before God in the lies, blasphemy, the defamation, and the curses which the mad Jews indulge in so freely and wantonly against the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, this dear mother, all Christians, all authority, and ourselves. Do not grant them protection, safe-conduct, or communion with us...With this faithful counsel and warning I wish to cleanse and exonerate my conscience.”
- “Accordingly, it must and dare not be considered a trifling matter but a most serious one to seek counsel against this and to save our souls from the Jews, that is, from the devil and from eternal death. My advice, as I said earlier, is:
 - ◆ First, that their synagogues be burned down, and that all who are able toss sulphur and pitch; it would be good if someone could also throw in some hellfire...
 - ◆ Second, that all their books--their prayer books, their Talmudic writings, also the entire Bible--be taken from them, not leaving them one leaf, and that these be preserved for those who may be converted...
 - ◆ Third, that they be forbidden on pain of death to praise God, to give thanks, to pray, and to teach publicly among us and in our country...
 - ◆ Fourth, that they be forbidden to utter the name of God within our hearing. For we cannot with a good conscience listen to this or tolerate it...”

I mention these facts not to condemn these men. I mention them only to show that soon after the deaths of the apostles the devil used men to remove Hebraic influence from the expression of the New Covenant faith. Furthermore, he used them to sow seeds of disdain for the Torah. This is unfortunate because history has shown that their disciples learned and practiced their anti-Semitism, disdain for the Torah and spiritualization of Scripture. This will become important later, when I demonstrate that the entirety of Scripture shows that believing Gentiles are to partake in covenant relationship with Adonai *as they are nourished from the Israelite/Hebraic root*.

By the end of the fifth century the following unscriptural *practices and “doctrines of men”* were deeply rooted within the Western Roman church.

1. Prayers for the dead
2. Belief in purgatory
3. Penance
4. The view that “The Lord’s Supper” is a sacrifice that must be administered by priests
5. The division of the Church into a clergy and laity
6. Worship of martyrs
7. Worship of relics
8. Salvation by works
9. Ascription of magical powers to relics
10. Monasticism
11. Asceticism
12. Worldliness

Most of us can readily understand the obvious dangers of the “*doctrines of men*” listed above. What most of us don’t readily realize is that repression of the Hebraic roots of the New Covenant has been just as dangerous. In fact, if the Gentile Church had remained grounded in its Hebraic roots, it possibly would not have succumbed to the “doctrines of men” listed above. For now, I only ask that you consider the height from which the Church fell (beginning at Pentecost until the fifth century). This is easily done by comparing and contrasting the actions of the early Church as recorded in the book of Acts with those of the Church exemplified in the 12 points listed above. By the 1500s we can add the following items to the list of unscriptural practices and “doctrines of men” engaged in by those who called themselves followers of Christ:

1. Worship of Mary
2. Payment of indulgences
3. Wars fought with “Christian” armies
4. Political corruption
5. Inquisitions
6. The Word of Elohim (God) taken from the common man
7. Greed, idolatry, pagan festivals, and the list goes on
8. Persecution of Jews, heathens and heretics
9. The Spanish Inquisition--In 1480 King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain established a tribunal to purge the Church of those who clandestinely clung to their Hebraic faith. Wholesale arrests followed. In 1481 the first victims were burnt at the stake. Over the years an estimated 30,000 Jews were consigned to the flames.

It is obvious *by any standar* that by the early fifteenth century the condition of the Church was best described as **APOSTATE**. Furthermore, it is easy to understand why the Reformation was necessary. Surely, the prophecy of the Apostle Paul found a significant fulfillment in the Church era just prior to the Reformation.

- **I Timothy 4:1-5:** “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ²Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods . . .”
- **II Tim 3:1-5:** “But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ²People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- ⁵*having a form of godliness but denying its power*. Have nothing to do with them.”

WHAT LESSONS DO THE REFORMATION TEACH US?

Again I repeat, history clearly shows that the condition of the Western Roman Church (the root from which Protestantism sprang) was *apostate* in direct fulfillment of Paul's prophecy in first and second Timothy (this however does not negate a future or present apostasy of similar or greater proportions). This apostasy was due in large part to a replacement of Biblical authority by doctrines of men and suppression of the Hebraic roots of the New Covenant faith. The foundation for the Reformation was to be found in people who cherished the belief that the only authority for true faith and doctrine was the Bible. The Reformation occurred because people began to base their convictions on the Word of Adonai instead of upon decrees of men. Many truths we take for granted today were unknown to most people before the Reformation took place.

I personally believe it would be more correct to call the Reformation the **RESTORATION**. In **Acts 3:19-21** Peter states, "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you--even Yeshua. ²¹***He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to RESTORE everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.***" As this verse clearly teaches, the Lord will not come back until the restoration of all things. Back in Deuteronomy 29-30 Moses prophesied over the children of Israel concerning what would happen to them in the latter days. He told of all the curses of the Torah that would befall them. But he also told them that in the last days Adonai would restore them from all of the nations where he had dispersed them. He would circumcise their hearts so that they would serve Him. No one can doubt that Adonai began to speed this process along when he regathered the nation of Israel in 1948, after nearly 2,000 years of wandering in the desert of the nations. Since 1967 there has been an on-going revival amongst Jewish people. Adonai in His sovereignty is opening their eyes to see Yeshua as their Messiah. Was this not prophesied in **Ezekiel 37:1-10**:

"¹The hand of Adonai was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of Adonai and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. ³He asked me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' I said, 'O Sovereign LORD, you alone know.' ⁴Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of Adonai! ⁵This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. ⁶I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am Adonai.' ' ⁷So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.' ' "

10So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet--a vast army.”

Note how Israel is depicted as a valley of dry bones with no flesh and no life. Is this not a prophetic picture of the nation of Israel over the past 2,000 years after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD by Titus and their dispersion in 135 AD by Hadrian? The nation was dead, not a nation for 2,000 years, truly a valley of dry bones. Then, the flesh coming onto the bones symbolizes the restoration of the nation as a physical entity in 1948. But this was only a physical restoration of the nation, not spiritual, for they hadn't had their hearts circumcised to receive their Messiah. But beginning around 1967 Adonai started a revival amongst the Jewish people worldwide. The breath (spirit) coming into the dead bodies symbolizes this. Paul taught that the physical/natural comes first before the spiritual. First the dead, dispersed nation of Israel was resurrected physically in 1948. Now we are witnessing the spiritual rebirth of the nation as hundreds of thousands of Jews find true faith in their Messiah.

We should also expect that there would be a restoration within Gentile Christianity too. Why? Because the history of the Church parallels the history of the nation of Israel in many ways. At the birth of the nation of Israel and for a few hundred years afterward, the presence of the Glory of Adonai remained in Jerusalem. Then, after the apostasy of Solomon, the nation quickly fell into decline and division. So likewise, the Church of the book of Acts was powerful and turned its world upside down. But just like Israel, it left its first love through sin and apostasy, which led to decline and division. And how great that division has been. Since we know that Yeshua is coming back for a bride without spot or wrinkle, what needed to happen to that apostate Church of the 1500s? It needed to be restored! I submit to you that what we call the Reformation was a sovereign move of Adonai to restore His Bride so that eventually when He comes she will be without spot or wrinkle. This came about as He sovereignly raised up men to restore truth that had been lost because of the deceptions of the traditions and doctrines of men. All of the great men of the Reformation helped restore truth. In fact most of the current denominations broke away from the Roman Catholic Church so that they could practice the new truths that Adonai had shown them. This is a very important observation. In Adonai's dealings with His people, if the group He has established does not fulfill His will, He will raise up a new group of people, anoint them to fulfill His purposes and set the previous group aside. For example:

1. When the children of Israel (those who actually lived in and were delivered from Egypt) rejected Adonai's provision in the desert, He let them wander for 40 years until they all died (except Joshua and Caleb) and raised up their children to possess the land. *Please note that Adonai destroyed the group who wouldn't fulfill His purposes and raised up another.*
2. When Saul rejected the Lord, He took His anointing off Saul, placed it on David, and raised him up to make him king over Israel. Since Saul would not fulfill His purposes, Adonai raised up someone else. *Please note that Saul, the one who didn't fulfill Adonai's purposes, persecuted David whom Adonai was preparing to take his place.*
3. When the Hebrew nation did not fulfill Adonai's calling under the Torah to bring salvation to the world (**Isaiah 26:17-18**: “As a woman with child and about to give

birth writhes and cries out in her pain, so were we in your presence, O LORD. 18We were with child, we writhed in pain, but we gave birth to wind. *We have not brought salvation to the earth; we have not given birth to people of the world.*”), He established a New Covenant with those who had faith in Messiah and commissioned them to bring salvation to the world. *Please note that the unbelieving Jews, the one who didn't fulfill Adonai's purposes, persecuted the Messianic believers whom Adonai used in their place.*

4. When the Western Roman Church did not represent Yeshua and true Biblical faith to the unbelieving world, He raised up the Reformers to begin the process of restoration of true Biblical faith. *Please note that the Western Roman Church, the ones who didn't fulfill Adonai's purposes, persecuted the Reformers whom Adonai used in their place. Get the picture?*

Each Reformer had a morsel of truth. Adonai didn't give any one man all truths. Here's a small sampling:

1. John Wycliff translated the New Covenant into English so that people could read the Scriptures for themselves.
2. John Huss taught that Messiah alone is the head of the universal Church.
3. Martin Luther taught that we're saved by faith alone apart from works.

Other truths taught by the Reformers are as follows:

1. They taught only the writings of the Apostolic Church should be used as the basis for New Covenant life.
2. They taught the priesthood of all believers
3. They taught the importance of preaching the Word
4. They taught salvation by grace through faith
5. They taught that the Scriptures were the final authority for all matters of doctrine
6. And much more

Please notice that none of the items listed above is a new revelation. This is a very important point. Please make a mental note of what I'm saying. *None of the points listed above is new revelation.* They were already in the Bible! They were truths that existed in the Bible all through the dark ages. So why couldn't anyone see them earlier? Well, I'm not 100 percent sure, but it was probably because many in the Church weren't saved. Many didn't know the Scriptures. Many who knew the Scriptures possibly didn't believe them. Lastly, and very importantly, many people based their faith and worldview entirely on the doctrines of men that had been passed down to them. Thus, when the Reformers came and said, “Indulgences are wrong...We are all priests...We're saved by faith through grace...Purgatory doesn't exist...Penance is wrong etc. ...” many rejected them because the reformers' message was foreign to their paradigms. In other words, the Western Roman Church was so steeped in paganism and salvation by works that when Luther said salvation is not by works but by faith, they thought he was crazy. Sound familiar? Sure it does. The religious leaders of Yeshua's time rejected Him because He didn't fit the mold of their religious worldview. He didn't teach the Scriptures as they did, neither did He live His life according to the traditions of men, but

according to the word of Adonai. They had believed a lie for so long, they couldn't receive the truth, so they persecuted that which they didn't understand.

So the Reformation continued. But a strange thing happened. The Reformers couldn't agree with each other. Some Reformers felt others hadn't gone far enough to distance themselves from the Western Roman Church. Well, to make a long story shorter, the result of the Reformation was the formation of many denominations. When one group didn't agree with the established order, they'd start a new movement. This is where we see another principle. When one group sees a truth that they can't practice within the establishment, they need to go out of the establishment to practice the new truth. For example:

1. Luther couldn't practice salvation by faith in the Catholic Church, so he started what later became known as the Lutheran movement.
2. When certain believers thought that reform wasn't happening quickly enough, they separated and became known as the Anabaptists.
3. When certain believers thought that reform wasn't happening quickly enough, they separated from the Episcopal Church of England and became Separatists.
4. Eventually, more and more groups formed in order to practice truths they felt they couldn't practice in the current establishment. We began to see Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers, Mennonites, Methodists, etc.

Unfortunately, as Adonai continued to restore more truths to the Church, the Church continued to splinter because the previous movement couldn't handle the "new wine" of the next movement. Thus, was the Reformation. Hmmm. Was? That's right, what do we mean, was? Most Christians look at the Reformation as something that **occurred**, past tense. You know, history! Well, I don't think that the Reformation was an event that ended! *I believe it's still occurring!* In fact, I don't think Adonai will stop restoring truths (truths we were blinded to because of wrong theology and/or traditions of men) until, when? Until we as His body are one! The oneness spoken of by Yeshua in John 17, as He is in the Father and as the Father is in Him. The Reformation began in 1517 with Martin Luther's 95 theses nailed to the Castle Church Door in Wittenberg and it will continue until the Bride has made herself ready to receive her Groom. In fact, that's why we're experiencing this Restoration; to enable us to prepare ourselves to receive Yeshua. Let me show you further evidence that Adonai's Restoration continued throughout this century and is still occurring.

Remember what happened at the turn of the century when Adonai poured out the Holy Spirit on Azusa Street? Many of the established main-line denominational Churches rejected the experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as from the devil, choosing instead to believe that the experience had passed away with the Apostles. The newly Spirit-baptized believers couldn't practice speaking in tongues in the established Churches, so now we have Pentecostals. Then Pentecostals gave rise to Charismatics. Note how Adonai has recently used different groups to restore praise and worship. Note also how He has been restoring the five-fold ministry (seemingly in reverse order) since the Reformation era. First teachers, to teach His word to people who hadn't known His word for centuries. Then pastors to care for the newly formed Protestant congregations. Evangelists were next and continue even until now. Prophetic ministry got a big push by the Spirit in the 1970s. I'm not saying that Adonai hasn't had these

ministry gifts functioning all along. But clearly He seems to have emphasized and/or breathed new life into various truths and gifts as it has seemed fit to Him. So you see, the Restoration continues. The tendency has been for each group to receive restoration of a truth only to sit on it, thinking that they'd arrived. This posture is one of pride, and it prevents us from receiving new truths that the Lord may be restoring. If we continue to resist, He will just pour the blessing out on someone else who will receive it. Consider the Holy Spirit Baptism. Many in the Church still think it's not a valid experience. Many of us know it's valid because we've experienced it. However, the greatest proof of the validity of the Holy Spirit Baptism is the testimony of Scripture itself. The truth of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit has been recorded in the Bible for almost 2,000 years (even hundreds more if you include the prophecies in the Tanakh), yet without the work of the Spirit of Truth illuminating our minds, we would never see or understand the Scriptures. One of the most amazing Scriptures in the entire Bible is in Luke 24:45, "Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures." *This verse implies that without the Holy Spirit shining His light on a particular aspect of Adonai's revelation, we would never see it.* This is even more staggering when you consider that **Yeshua told the disciples over and over in plain language** that He would need to suffer, die and be raised on the third day! See how needy we truly are. This is so important to grasp! The disciples had the testimony of the Tanakh and Yeshua the Messiah himself telling them for three and a half years that He needed to suffer, die and be resurrected! Yet, they did not believe, neither did they understand until He supernaturally opened their eyes to see and understand what had been written and what He had told them. I have a question for you. Can you receive the fact that maybe in these last days Adonai wants to restore another truth that's been in the Word for almost 2,000 years? A truth that hasn't been well understood for 2,000 years since the Apostles died?

Note, in each movement of Adonai, people had to make choices between continuing with their current traditions or breaking away to embrace something that was new and usually radically different from their previous experience. The children of Israel's choice not to go into the promised land and their longing to go back to Egypt became the reason why they missed Adonai's new move into the promised land. As the writer of Hebrews tells us, they died in the wilderness for their inability to have ears to hear. When Adonai took His anointing off Saul and placed it on David, David's best friend, Jonathan, made a choice to stay with his father Saul instead of attaching himself to David as many other men had. His family relationship to his father was more important to him than going with Adonai's new move. He paid for it with his physical life. When the Jews rejected Yeshua because His "new doctrine" was against the traditions they'd grown up with, many may have made the ultimate stumble into eternal damnation. When the Catholic Church rejected Martin Luther's "new doctrine" many of them probably sealed their eternal fate since many *thought they were saved by their works*. If they had only listened to Luther, perhaps more of them would have listened long enough to catch the revelation that we are only saved by grace through faith. Many truly born-again believers who've rejected the Baptism in the Holy Spirit have missed out on a blessing. They stumbled because the restored truth wasn't what they'd been taught or used to. I'm not trying to sound macabre by insinuating that anyone who doesn't go with Adonai's new move is lost. I'm only saying that for some people eternal salvation could be at stake, whereas for others (and probably *most*) Adonai's blessings, eternal rewards and/or maturation in Messiah may be at stake. It is a surety that people have forfeited present and/or future rewards and blessings because they didn't have ears to hear the Spirit calling them to a restored truth.

So, here are some one million dollar questions.

1. Did the Reformation/Restoration end or is it still continuing?
2. If Adonai confronted you with a new revelation, would you have ears to hear? Remember, I mean a restored truth, not something no one has ever heard of before. In other words, if someone could show you from the Bible a particular truth that you had rejected for years because of wrong theology and the commandments of men would you accept it? If they could show you **CONCLUSIVELY from BOTH THE OLD AND NEW COVENANTS** that the Scriptures unanimously support a doctrine and/or understanding that you've rejected all of your life, would you have ears to hear? Remember, in all of the examples I listed above Adonai confronted people with restored truths that were totally opposite to what they'd been taught. Think about that. It won't be easy.

THE MESSIANIC MOVEMENT: IS IT OF MEN OR OF ADONAI?

In Romans chapters 9 – 11 Paul makes it clear that:

1. Blindness in part has come upon the Jewish people
2. The gospel will be preached to Gentiles to bring them into covenant with Adonai until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled
3. One day Israel will experience ***national salvation***

Many Christians today are aware of the fact that Adonai is not through with the nation of Israel. One of the most staggering events since the creation of the earth occurred in 1948. A resurrection occurred. No, not a resurrection of a biological entity. A resurrection of a nation occurred! How can a people, who were dispersed throughout the entire world 2,000 years ago, become a nation again? Even Adonai himself represented the nation of Israel as a valley of “dry bones.” This re-gathering of the nation of Israel ignited the faith of many Christians this century. On the other hand, many Christians, especially the theologian types, were shocked. You see, many Christians have believed the *replacement theology* “doctrine of man,” which unfortunately started with the Church Fathers (note the inherent anti-Semitism in the examples listed earlier). In a nutshell, replacement theology states that when the Jews rejected Yeshua, Adonai rejected the Jews. Currently Adonai’s people are the “Church” and in order for a Jew to be saved, they need to reject their Hebraic heritage and become engrafted into a Gentile tree. Sounds a little backward doesn’t it. The re-establishment of Israel as a nation caused many eyebrows to raise in 1948. In 1967 the Jews recaptured the city of Jerusalem against all odds in the six-day war of 1967. Once again Adonai was proving that the “gifts and callings of Adonai are irrevocable” as stated in Romans 11:29. Now I have one question for you. Over the centuries, how many Jews has Gentile Christianity brought to saving faith in Yeshua the Messiah? Not very many. In fact, when you consider that some of the Jews’ most severe persecutions and pogroms were delivered to them in the name of Jesus Christ, “the Gentile Savior,” it’s a wonder that any Jews get saved! We may not realize this, but to most unbelieving Jews the name Jesus Christ and the religion of Christianity is synonymous with refuse. You see, of all people, the Jews know their history. And the persecutions delivered to them and their forefathers by the Gentile Church in the name of Jesus Christ are still open, unhealed, festering wounds.

Now may I ask, how many Jewish people have been brought to the Lord since 1967? I don’t have definitive numbers yet, but it’s staggering. Something happened in 1967 in the spiritual realm after the Jews recaptured Jerusalem. Jews began coming to faith in their Messiah in remarkable numbers. Until I can get my hands on concrete numbers please except these estimates. According to an acquaintance who works for Chosen People Ministries (a Messianic Jewish Outreach Ministry to Jewish people), in 1975 there were only three Messianic Jewish congregations worldwide! Today, a mere 24 years later, there are literally hundreds of Messianic Jewish congregations worldwide. Furthermore, literally ***THOUSANDS*** of Jews have come to faith in their Messiah Yeshua in those same 24 years. Hmmm. That’s interesting. Think of the ramifications of those numbers. The current revival within Jewish people is staggering, with enormous implications. Paul stated that “blindness in part” had come upon Jews until the “fullness of the Gentiles” had come in. The majority of these Messianic Jews

meet in Messianic synagogues on the Sabbath. They keep the feasts as prescribed in the Torah and they are Torah observant. Now I have another question. Is the Messianic movement of Adonai or of men? Do you remember the first Messianic movement? It occurred on the day of Pentecost in the Book of Acts. In **Acts 5:38**, Gamaliel, a teacher of the Torah had this to say about the new Messianic movement:

“Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. ³⁹***But if it is from God***, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”

I mention this Scripture only to show that we should at least wonder whether or not the Messianic movement is of Adonai or not. **After all, if the formation of the nation of Israel (physical restoration) was a miracle, then how much more a miracle is the salvation of the Jewish people (spiritual restoration).** I believe the Messianic movement is of Adonai. However, it raises more questions:

1. Why isn't the Messianic revival occurring primarily as a result of the Gentile Christian witness?
2. Why is the expression of Messianic faith so vastly different than the expression of Gentile Christianity; especially since we *supposedly* serve the same Messiah and use the same standard of truth (the Old and New Covenants)?

The answer to question one is simple. In order for a Jewish person to meet their Messiah in a Gentile Christian context, they would need to give up their Hebraic heritage. You don't think so. Oh yes they do. You see, Messianics say that we should be worshipping on the Sabbath (Friday evening to Saturday evening). Messianics say that we should be keeping the biblical feasts. Messianics say that the Torah is still the standard for New Covenant behavior. Not so with Gentile Christians. Our day of worship is Sunday, our “feasts” are Christmas, Easter etc., and realistically our standard of righteousness is the New Covenant *only* (“for we are not under Law but grace”); all are incompatible with the Hebraic roots of our Messianic brothers. The answer to question two is also simple. The New Covenant was, is and will always be intimately associated with the land, people and Scriptures of Israel regardless of whether or not we Gentiles understand. To the extent that we Gentiles try to replace the inherent Hebraic context of the New Covenant, to that extent we err from the truth. I've already given a few examples of teachings by the early Church Fathers and Church council decisions that effectively removed the Hebraic roots from New Covenant worship as practiced by Gentile believers.

As I've stated above, Yeshua is only coming back for a bride that is without spot or wrinkle, a bride who is one, even as the Son and the Father are one. Do we see oneness now? No. What we see is a Gentile Church divided 1,000 different ways and each of those 1,000 denominations is totally different from their Messianic brothers (who, by the way are also divided in various ways). I submit that Adonai will have **His** way. But which “way” is it going to be. There are three possibilities, but only one reality:

1. Gentile Christians and our traditions and system of worship only. This means that our Messianic brothers need to see the “light” and become converted to “Gentile Christianity.”
2. Messianic believers and their traditions and system of worship only. This means that we Gentile Christians need to see the “light” and become converted to Messianic worship.
3. Both are right. Therefore, Adonai doesn’t mind that Messianic believers worship Him one way and Gentile Christians worship Him in a completely different manner.

Obviously, option three is out. Option three cannot be true because it doesn’t satisfy the condition that we be ONE in Messiah. The Father, Yeshua and the Holy Spirit are not confused. He isn’t the author of the diverse manner in which Messianic believers and Gentiles currently worship and express their faith. Therefore, it seems that options one and two need to be weighed in the balance of truth. The only standard of truth is the Bible. I stated towards the beginning that as I studied what my Messianic brothers had to say about New Covenant faith and worship, I was deeply convicted.

ADONAI'S RESTORATION THROUGH THE MESSIANIC MOVEMENT

I believe the Messianic movement is an **Adonai-ordained restoration** movement to restore the following truths:

1. Gentile believers literally become *Israelites (Abraham's descendents)* by faith in Yeshua the Messiah.
2. Gentiles become engrafted into the olive tree of Israel where we are to partake of the nourishment from the Hebraic root, not vice versa.
3. It was ***never*** Adonai's intention for Gentiles to become separated from their Hebraic roots and to form "Gentile Christianity" apart from Messianic believers.
4. Gentile and Jewish believers are to be ONE in Him with ONE system of worship in Spirit and in truth. Truth as revealed in the Old and New Covenants, not as directed by men whether they be the Church Fathers or the Roman Catholic Church.
5. The New Covenant was made with "the House of Judah and the House of Israel," not with a separate Gentile entity.
6. The Scriptures clearly teach that the Torah is still to be obeyed and was not abolished as is currently taught in Christianity.
7. The Torah is an eternal, conditional (on the part of the people, not Adonai) covenant with Israel.
8. Adonai established a New (actually Renewed) Covenant with the Israelite people, which still has as its basis the Torah, Prophets and Writings (the Tanakh). Whereas the Old Covenant was based on the Torah written on tablets of stone, the Renewed Covenant is based on the Holy Spirit writing the Torah on the hearts of Adonai's people.

And here is where the rubber meets the road. It's very easy for us to look back at the historical Reformation and see how Adonai raised up men and women to restore truths that had been hidden due to incorrect theology and doctrines/traditions of men. But are we able to be confronted with Adonai's truth, even though we think we already have it? Will we stumble as so many previous people did when they were confronted with truth that didn't line up with their worldviews or traditions? For the most part Gentile Christianity is impotent to reach orthodox Jews. Why is that? For one thing unsaved Jews hate anything associated with Christianity, because, traditionally, "Christians" have been their most vehement persecutors. Is our message missing something? Could it be that in these last days Adonai has restored truth to the Messianic believers to deliver to the Gentiles? Might Adonai have passed over the Gentile Christian movement to accomplish His task of bringing salvation to the Jewish people? Will the traditions and doctrines of the Church Fathers and Reformers prevent us from understanding Adonai's restored truth concerning His feasts, Sabbath rest, worship and Torah? Will Gentile Christians eventually persecute Messianic believers because of our stubbornness in not coming to a "Gentile Root"? These are sobering, serious questions. We must have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying. Typically, Adonai doesn't shout, "Hey, this is a restoration movement from Me!" We have the responsibility of discerning the times. When we see literally thousands of Jews being brought into the Kingdom of God, it's up to us to ask the appropriate questions.

I hope that no one is offended in me because of who I am and what I'm not. I'm just Tony Robinson, no one special. I'm not Billy Graham or John Wesley. Nevertheless, if Adonai can use a donkey to speak His truth then perhaps He can use me. I'm simply giving my testimony to anyone who will listen. To whoever reads this, I do not present this information in a spirit of pride, but one of humility. Previously I either didn't understand what I'm presenting now or ***I didn't believe it myself***. That's right. I've been on both sides of the fence now. I know most of the arguments against what I'm about to present because I used them. As I searched the Scriptures in a spirit of humility, Adonai's Holy Spirit opened my eyes to His Truth. I will not argue with anyone about this subject, but I will dialogue in a spirit of meekness and love. This document is intended as a reference source to those who seek the truth. Only Adonai can shine His light of truth. I know there's nothing I can do to open anyone's eyes. My purpose in writing this position paper was to put together a somewhat comprehensive and scriptural explanation/proof of the points listed in one through eight above. Hopefully, I have provided the relevant questions and Scriptures necessary for you to make your own assessment. Please don't read this with the purpose of finding evidence to prove me wrong. The Bereans of Acts 17:10-11 were noble because they searched to see if what Paul said was true. They didn't seek to prove what he said was wrong. You will never understand a truth that you previously rejected if you're busy trying to disprove what you're reading. I exhort you to only use Scripture to come to your conclusions, not emotions. In a real way, this position paper is meant for those who want to go back to the New Covenant pattern as a basis of living their faith. That's something you must decide for yourself. The assertions and proof-texts in this paper will not be consistent with non-Biblical tradition. So forget tradition for a while and only accept what the Old and New Covenants have to say. Then let's see if we wind up at the same conclusion. May Adonai bless you in the name of Yeshua the Messiah.

THE OLD COVENANT (TORAH) FORESHADOWING OF UNITY WITHIN ADONAI'S ASSEMBLY

Even though the Old Covenant was made with the Israelite people, Adonai provided a way for believing Gentiles to be brought into covenant relationship with Him. But it was always in a context of Gentiles leaving their pagan gods to worship with the Israelite people as ONE assembly. First, I'd like to show that even in the Torah Adonai allowed aliens (Gentiles) to be ONE with the Israelites. It should be generally understood that the Old Covenant was made with the Israelites, so I won't bother to demonstrate that point. The fact that Adonai allowed Gentiles to be saved as part of the Old Covenant (if they joined with Israel) is a *foreshadowing* of the two, Gentile and Jew, worshiping as ONE in Yeshua. The point I'm making is this. If Israelites and Gentiles worshiped together as ONE under the Old Covenant, *how much more* are we to worship as ONE in the New Covenant (**Ephesians 2:15b-16**: "... *His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two*, thus making peace, ¹⁶and in this one body to reconcile both of them to Adonai through the cross, by which *he put to death their hostility*"). The following sections are provided to show the Old Covenant foreshadowing of Jew/Israelite and Gentile/Non-Israelite as ONE in covenant relationship with Adonai.

Importance of the Old Covenant--It is an amazing fact that everything written in the New Covenant was already taught, typified, demonstrated or prophesied in the Torah. That's right, every New Covenant doctrine, commandment, etc., was taught in some manner in the Torah. Therefore, we should be able to establish any doctrine based on the testimony of *two witnesses* (the Old and New Covenants). Thus, I will use both the Old and New Covenants to substantiate all my assertions.

The Torah applied *equally* between Israelites and the aliens (Gentiles) living among them. There was no difference.

- **Exodus 12:47-49**: "The whole community of Israel must celebrate it. ⁴⁸ 'An *alien living among you* who wants to celebrate Adonai's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it. ⁴⁹*The same law applies to the native-born and to the alien living among you.*'"
- **Deuteronomy 31:10-13**: "Then Moses commanded them: At the end of every seven years, in the year for canceling debts, during the Feast of Tabernacles, ¹¹when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law before them in their hearing. ¹²Assemble the people--men, women and children, *and the aliens living in your towns--so they can listen and learn to fear Adonai your God and follow carefully all the words of this law.* ¹³Their children, who do not know this law, must hear it and learn to fear Adonai your God as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."
- **Leviticus 16:29-30**: "This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must deny yourselves and not do any work--*whether native-*

- born or an alien living among you--* ³⁰because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you.”
- **Numbers 9:14:** “An alien living among you who wants to celebrate Adonai's Passover must do so in accordance with its rules and regulations. *You must have the same regulations for the alien and the native-born.*”
 - **Numbers 15:15-16:** “The community is to *have the same rules for you and for the alien living among you*; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. *You and the alien shall be the same before Adonai: ¹⁶The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and to the alien living among you.*”
 - **Isaiah 56:3-6:** “*Let no foreigner who has bound himself to Adonai say, ‘The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.’* And let not any eunuch complain, ‘I am only a dry tree.’ ⁴For this is what Adonai says: ‘To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant-- ⁵to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. ⁶*And foreigners who bind themselves to Adonai to serve him, to love the name of Adonai, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant-- ⁷these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations. ⁸The Sovereign LORD declares--he who gathers the exiles of Israel: I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.*”

Adonai defined the Torah community of Israel as those who were native-born (Israelite) and the aliens (Gentiles).

- **Exodus 12:19:** “. . . And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off *from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born.*”
- **Isaiah 14:1:** “The LORD will have compassion on Jacob; once again he will choose Israel and will settle them in their own land. *Aliens will join them and unite with the house of Jacob.*”
- **Joshua 8:33,35:** “*All Israel, aliens and citizens alike*, with their elders, officials and judges, were standing on both sides of the ark of the covenant. . . There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read to *the whole assembly of Israel, including the women and children, and the aliens who lived among them.*”

The terms/conditions of the Torah applied to the aliens (Gentiles) also.

- **Deuteronomy 29:1-2, 10-12:** “*These are the terms of the covenant* Adonai commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in Moab, in addition to the covenant he had made with them at Horeb. ²Moses summoned all the Israelites and said to them . . . *All of you* are standing today in the presence of Adonai your God --your leaders and chief men, your elders and officials, and all the other men of Israel,

¹¹together with your children and your wives, and the aliens living in your camps who chop your wood and carry your water. ¹²You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with Adonai your God, a covenant Adonai is making with you this day and sealing with an oath ...”

Adonai said that aliens would inherit a portion of the land.

- **Ezekiel 47:21-23:** “You are to distribute this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel. ²²You are to allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the aliens who have settled among you and who have children. You are to consider them as native-born Israelites; along with you they are to be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. ²³In whatever tribe the alien settles, there you are to give him his inheritance, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

Remember that Joshua and Caleb were the only two Israelites who left Egypt that were allowed to enter the promised land. Caleb was not a native Israelite (Genesis 15:18-20 with Numbers 32:12).

- **Genesis 15:18-20:** “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates-- ¹⁹the land of the Kenites, **Kenizzites**, Kadmonites, ²⁰Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, ²¹Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites ...” **Numbers 32:12:** “... not one except Caleb son of Jephunneh the **Kenizzite** and Joshua son of Nun, for they followed Adonai wholeheartedly.”

Even in the New Covenant we see that believing Gentiles who had become Israelite proselytes met with the Jews, on the Sabbath, in the Synagogue. Note the Gentiles weren’t meeting apart from the Jews, on a different day, in a different place.

- **Acts 13:14-16:** “On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. ¹⁵After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak.” ¹⁶Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: “**Men of Israel and you Gentiles** who worship God, listen to me!”
- **Acts 13:26:** “Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent.”
- **Acts 17:2-4:** “As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. ‘This Yeshua I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,’ he said. ⁴Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of **God-fearing Greeks** and not a few prominent women.”
- **Acts 18:4:** “Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and **Greeks**.”

- **Acts 13:48:** “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.”

Adonai has always called Gentiles to leave their religion and unite with His people to worship with them as ONE. Gentiles who worshiped Adonai in the Old and New Covenants left their gods and joined with Israel in worship of the one and only true Elohim (God).

- The example of Abraham--**Genesis 12:1-3:** “The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’” This example shows that Adonai has always required His children to leave culture, family etc. to cleave to Him.
- The example of Ruth--**Ruth 1:16-18:** “But Ruth replied, ‘Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May Adonai deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.’ ¹⁸When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.”

This is **THE** classic Old Covenant passage that shows *Ruth as a type of Gentile believer*. She united herself to Naomi who represents the children of Israel and was later married to Boaz the Kinsman-Redeemer, a type of Messiah. Notice, she said that Naomi’s God would be her God and Naomi’s people would be her people. To the extent that we Gentile Christians worship apart from Messianic believers, are we saying “your God will be my God, but I don’t want to have your people as my people?” I believe Adonai wants us Gentiles to have the same mind in us that Ruth had. I will paraphrase what Ruth said in the New Covenant reality that her life foreshadows: “May Adonai deal with us, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates us Gentiles from you Jews/Israelites.”

UNITY WITHIN ADONAI'S ASSEMBLY EXPRESSED IN THE NEW COVENANT

Unfortunately, Messianic believers and Gentile Christians are not ONE. As I've stated earlier, I believe Adonai is using Messianic believers to restore certain truths to the body of Messiah. One of these truths is that Adonai wants Messianic believers and Gentile Christians to be ONE.

Why? Because we are one in Messiah. It is awesome that many Gentile Christians go through great lengths to break down racial walls (and rightfully so). This is noble and should be done; however, does the New Covenant put an emphasis on Gentile Christians breaking down racial walls between Gentiles? Obviously, the more racial walls that come down the better. But is that how Adonai meant it to be. I submit to you that the wall the New Covenant talks about breaking down is the wall between Jew and Gentile. That should prick our spiritual curiosity. In numerous places Adonai's word mentions that Jew and Gentile are to be ONE; however, the division between Jewish believers and Gentile believers is readily evident. The only reason that the Jew/Gentile wall exists is because approximately 2,000 years ago (after the Apostles died) Gentiles departed from the Hebraic roots of their faith. The result? Anti-Semitism, Inquisitions, pogroms and persecution of Jews by Gentile "Christians" in the name of Jesus Christ. This wall must be broken down, for it is a strong wall that truly thwarts Adonai's end-time purposes. Did this wall exist in the New Covenant Church? A brief survey of the New Covenant, our only pattern for living our faith, shows that Jewish/Israelite and Gentile believers were ONE. They worshipped together, ate together, celebrated the feasts together, kept the Sabbath together and kept the Torah together (more on that later).

Despite the separation we currently see between Messianic believers and Gentile Christians, The New Covenant shows that Adonai's *original intent* was for Jew and Gentile to be united as One New Man. The only pattern we should seek must be based on the New Covenant pattern. *Even if our current experience demonstrates a polarization of Messianic believers and Gentile Christians, and even if the Christian Church Fathers preached a separation of the two, may the New Covenant example be true.* **According to the New Covenant pattern**, did Gentile believers worship in union with or apart from Jewish believers? I submit to you that if the New Covenant pattern shows (as already demonstrated by the Old Covenant) that Adonai's intention was that the two worship as one, then each of us has a responsibility to re-establish that pattern as best we can. What Adonai has put together let no man put asunder!

The New Covenant shows that Adonai's pattern is for believing Gentiles to be cleansed by faith, made equal partakers in the New Covenant, and joined as ONE with the Jewish people (as typified by Ruth). The flow is always Gentiles INTO the Israelite root. The end result is always ONE fold comprised of Jews AND Gentiles; not two folds with Jews meeting separate from Gentiles. The vision that Adonai wants us to see is that if He treats us as ONE, then we should treat each other as ONE.

- **Acts 15:8-9:** "God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. *He made no distinction between us and them*, for he purified their hearts by faith."

- **John 10:16:** “I have other sheep [Gentiles] that are not of this sheep pen [Jews]. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock [not two separate flocks] and one shepherd.”
- **John 11:47:** “Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, ‘You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.’ ⁵¹He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Yeshua would die for the Jewish nation, ⁵²and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God [Gentiles], to bring them together and make them one [not two separate flocks].”
- **Romans 11:17-18:** “If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, ¹⁸do not boast over those branches.”
- **Ephesians 2:11-20:** “Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called ‘uncircumcised’ by those who call themselves ‘the circumcision’ (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- ¹²remember that at that time you were separate from Messiah, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Yeshua the Messiah you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Messiah. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. ¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household ...”
- **Ephesians 3:6:** “This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Yeshua the Messiah.”

The New Covenant shows that Jewish proselytes and God-fearing Gentiles/ “proselytes at the gate” met together on the Sabbath in the synagogues. A proselyte was a Gentile who converted to Old Covenant Judaism by 1) circumcision, 2) immersion in the mikveh [ritual bath] and 3) offering a sacrifice. A God-fearer, also known as a “proselyte at the gate,” was a Gentile who had been drawn to Judaism but for whatever reason hadn’t undergone conversion. My goal in this section is to show that when the Gospel was presented to the God-fearing Gentiles and the Jews, Gentiles were already worshiping with Jews (under the Old Covenant) as one. Therefore, it’s not too hard to believe that those Jews and Gentiles who later believed in Yeshua would continue to meet together is it? Doesn’t spiritual common sense tell us that it would be just as easy (in fact easier) for Jew and Gentile to worship as one under the New Covenant than under the Old Covenant? Note below how often the New Covenant says they met together, in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

- **Acts 13:15-16:** “After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the *synagogue* rulers sent word to them, saying, ‘Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak.’ ¹⁶Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: ‘*Men of Israel and you Gentiles* who worship God, listen to me!’”
- **Acts 13:26:** “Brothers, *children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles*, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent.”
- **Acts 13:42-45:** “As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the *synagogue*, the people invited them *to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath*. ⁴³When the congregation was dismissed, many of the *Jews and devout converts to Judaism* followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to ***continue in the grace of God***. ⁴⁴***On the next Sabbath*** almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying.”
- **Acts 14:1:** “At Iconium Paul and Barnabas *went as usual into the Jewish synagogue*. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of *Jews and Gentiles believed*.”
- **Acts 17:2-4:** “As his custom was, Paul went into the *synagogue*, and *on three Sabbath days* he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. ‘This Yeshua I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,’ he said. ⁴Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did *a large number of God-fearing Greeks* and not a few prominent women.”
- **Acts 17:17:** “So he reasoned in the *synagogue* [by implication on a Sabbath] *with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks*, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.”
- **Acts 18:4:** “*Every Sabbath* he reasoned in the *synagogue*, trying to persuade *Jews and Greeks*.”
- **Acts 19:8-10:** “Paul entered the *synagogue* and spoke boldly there for *three months*, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰This went on for two years, so that all the *Jews and Greeks* who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.”

These verses show quite conclusively that many of the Greeks/Gentiles who believed were already worshipping with the Jews in synagogues on the Sabbath. As an aside: *It’s a good thing that the Old Covenant Gentile believers didn’t worship apart from the Jews on Sundays. They wouldn’t have been present to hear Paul’s message of salvation in Yeshua.*

These Scriptures show that the original Church in Antioch expected the New Covenant Gentiles to worship with the Jews together, in synagogues on the Sabbath.

- First we see that many Gentiles are brought to faith in Antioch: **Acts 11:20-21:** “Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Yeshua. ²¹*The*

Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.”

- Next we see that certain men (possibly believing Pharisees, Acts 15:5) told the Gentiles they needed to be circumcised after the manner of Moses to be saved: **Acts 15:1,5:** “Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers [Gentile believers]: ‘Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved’ ...Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, ‘The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.’”
- Next we see the Gentile believers called disciples in verse 10: **Acts 15:10:** “Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the *disciples* a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? ¹¹No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Yeshua that we are saved, just as they are.” I will demonstrate later that the yoke was not the Torah, but legalistic perversion of the Torah which says that you can’t be saved apart from legalistic works.
- Lastly, we see the advice given by James in **Acts 15:19-21:** “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. ²¹For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.”

The advice given in verse 19 is curious and almost strange for our 21st century minds/worldviews. If you brought someone to Yeshua would you tell them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood? Not exactly what I think a new believer needs to know. But what if you visualize yourself as a Torah-observant Messianic Jew (like those *believing* Pharisees in verse five) still obeying kosher laws. And what if Gentiles who know nothing about kosher laws are now expected to worship and fellowship with you? Furthermore, realize that those four prohibitions in verse 20 were widely practiced by Gentiles of that time. That behavior could cause some friction couldn’t it? I think these guidelines were given as practical requirements for fellowship between the believing Jews and Gentiles. A Gentile who participated in any of these practices would quickly offend his Jewish brothers. It was practical advice. And note that each requirement was taken from the Torah that we’ve supposedly been freed from.

The advice given in verse 21 is also strange unless you realize that the Gentiles were expected to meet with the Jews, in the synagogues on Sabbaths. It only makes sense that a new Gentile convert wouldn’t know anything about Adonai’s word (remember, the Scriptures they had at the time were the Old Covenant Scriptures). He wouldn’t know how to practically live out his new faith except by learning. This is exactly what verse 21 is stating. Verses 19 – 21 are simply stating this:

It is not right for anyone to force you to become circumcised and trust in works for your salvation. You Gentile believers need time to learn Adonai’s word so that you’ll know how to live your faith. For now please just follow these four simple guidelines which are given to

prevent conflict between you and the believing Jews. As you learn the word of Adonai by attending synagogue on the Sabbaths you'll learn what Adonai requires of you.

THE NEW COVENANT WAS MADE WITH ISRAEL, NOT WITH GENTILES

What is a Covenant? A covenant is a legal agreement or contract between two or more parties. Note that all covenants contain the following elements:

1. Parties to the covenant
2. Specified territories and areas of concern
3. A reason for its existence, a purpose
4. Rules, provisions and conditions
5. Outcomes, benefits and penalties. In covenants with Adonai, blessings and cursing
6. Signatures, witnesses and a seal
7. Implementation procedures: ratification, registration, down-payments, publication and starting dates

I would like to focus in on one aspect of the New Covenant--the parties. **According to the Bible**, who are the parties involved in the New Covenant? Obviously, Adonai is one of the parties, so I will offer no scriptural proof. But who is the other party? In the sections below I would like to provide scriptural evidence that the other party to the New Covenant is Israel. Note, I said Israel, not Gentiles (although I will show later that Adonai has always provided a way for Gentiles to be partakers of His covenants). This is foundational to all that I present. This point needs to be understood, grasped, believed and written within our hearts as THE TRUTH.

Old Covenant Examples--This is the classic Old Covenant passage that identifies *who* the New Covenant will be made with. This passage explicitly states with whom the New Covenant will be made.

- **Jeremiah 31:31:** “The time is coming, declares Adonai, when I will make *a New Covenant with the house of Israel* and *with the house of Judah*. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them, declares Adonai. This is the covenant *I will make with the house of Israel* after that time, declares Adonai. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know Adonai,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares Adonai. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

New Covenant Examples--Yeshua explicitly stated that the New Covenant (with its promise of salvation) was *from the Jews for the Jews*.

- **John 10:16:** “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be *one flock and one shepherd*.”
- **John 4:22:** “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, *for salvation is from the Jews*.” This statement by Yeshua is profound. As the

- Eternal Son of Adonai, through whom all men must receive forgiveness of sins, He would have been justified in saying, “salvation is from Me.” But He didn’t. He said it was from the Jews!
- **Acts 3:25:** “And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, ‘Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’ ²⁶When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”
 - **Mat 15:21-27:** “Leaving that place, Yeshua withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²²A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, ‘Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.’ ²³Yeshua did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, ‘Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.’ ²⁴He answered, ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.’ ²⁵The woman came and knelt before him. ‘Lord, help me!’ she said. ²⁶He replied, ‘It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.’ ²⁷ ‘Yes, Lord,’ she said, ‘but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.’”
 - **Hebrews 8:7-8:** “For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. ⁸But God found fault with the people and said: ‘The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.’”

Both Old and New Covenants confirm that the New Covenant is made with the people of Israel, not Gentiles.

GENTILES MUST BE GRAFTED INTO THE OLIVE TREE OF ISRAEL

As I've stated earlier, although both the Old and New Covenants were made with the children of Israel, Adonai's plan has always been to include the salvation of Gentiles (non-Israelites). One of the major problems that we have as Gentile Christians is the fact that we don't understand our proper identity. What identity do we Gentile believers have once we've obtained salvation/redemption? And how do we experience salvation/ redemption? The New Covenant clearly states that we obtain salvation/redemption by exercising saving faith in the redemptive work of Yeshua. Secondly, the New Covenant shows that when we believe we become Israelites in Adonai's eyes. This is the mechanism Adonai has chosen to bring salvation to the Gentiles. *We become Israelites when we demonstrate saving faith in Yeshua.* Our identity as an Israelite is the only basis by which we are made partakers in the New Covenant that was *only made with the house of Judah and the house of Israel.* Yeshua confirmed that although 1) salvation is only from the Jews and 2) He was only sent to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, His plan was to bring others who weren't part of the Jewish fold (Gentiles) into it. John 10:16 states: "I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

The Old Covenant has many passages that speak of Adonai taking a people for himself from the Gentiles. These passages are referenced in the New Covenant as proof that Adonai would bring the Gentiles to salvation.

- **Hosea 1:8-10:** "After she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, Gomer had another son. ⁹Then Adonai said, 'Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.' ¹⁰Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'" Paul states that this passage is referring to the Gentiles in **Romans 9:24-26:** "...even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵As he says in Hosea: 'I will call them my people who are not my people; and I will call her my loved one who is not my loved one,' ²⁶and, 'It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, You are not my people, they will be called sons of the living God.'"

In the Old Covenant Adonai refers to Israel as those who are, "Called by my Name" and "Adonai's people."

- **Exodus 22:31:** "You are to be my holy people"
- **Numbers 6:31:** "So they will put my name on the Israelite"
- **II Chronicles 7:14:** "if my people, who are called by my name"
- **I Samuel 2:24:** "among Adonai's people"
- **Isaiah 43:7:** "everyone who is called by my name"

The Old Covenant says that in some way Gentiles will also bear His Name just as the Israelites.

- **Isaiah 19:19-25:** “In that day there will be an altar to Adonai in the heart of Egypt, and a monument to Adonai at its border. ²⁰It will be a sign and witness to Adonai Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to Adonai because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them. ²¹So Adonai will make himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day they will acknowledge Adonai. They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings; they will make vows to Adonai and keep them. ²²The LORD will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to Adonai, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them. ²³In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. ²⁴In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. ²⁵The LORD Almighty will bless them, saying, ‘Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.’”
- **Jeremiah 12:14-17:** “This is what Adonai says: As for all my wicked neighbors who seize the inheritance I gave my people Israel, I will uproot them from their lands and I will uproot the house of Judah from among them. ¹⁵But after I uproot them, I will again have compassion and will bring each of them back to his own inheritance and his own country. ¹⁶And if they learn well the ways of my people and swear by my name, saying, ‘As surely as Adonai lives’--even as they once taught my people to swear by Baal--then they will be established among my people. ¹⁷But if any nation does not listen, I will completely uproot and destroy it, declares Adonai.”
- **Amos 9:11-13:** “In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be, ¹²so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name, declares Adonai, who will do these things. ¹³The days are coming, declares Adonai.”
- This passage refers to Gentiles as stated in **Acts 15:12-17**, “The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. ¹³When they finished, James spoke up: ‘Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. ¹⁵The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: ¹⁶After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, ¹⁷that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name.’”
- **Zechariah 2:11:** “Many nations will be joined with Adonai in that day and will become my people.”
- Many passages show conclusively and clearly that Adonai always intended to have Gentiles as “His people,” and they are found in both the Old and New Covenants. The Scriptures in Genesis state that Abraham would somehow bless all nations. The New Covenant clearly teaches that when we exercise saving faith in Yeshua, we become children of Abraham, **Israelites**, by faith. This is not a trivial matter. It’s necessary for us to be Abraham’s seed since all of the promises are to His seed—Israelites—not Gentiles. In Adonai’s eyes our faith in Abraham, the father of faith,

- reckons us as Abraham's descendents and therefore eligible for the covenant promises (**Galatians 3:14**, "He redeemed us *in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles* through Yeshua the Messiah, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit"). This is also how Adonai has chosen to bring Gentiles into covenant relationship, by making them His people. His people are those who are descendents of Abraham, but only children of the promise.
- **Genesis 12:1-2:** "The LORD had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'"
 - **Genesis 15:5-6:** "'Look up at the heavens and count the stars--if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' ⁶Abram believed Adonai, and he credited it to him as righteousness."
 - **Galatians 3:6-9:** "⁶Consider Abraham: 'He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.' ⁷Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. ⁸The Scripture foresaw that Adonai would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: 'All nations will be blessed through you.' ⁹So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith."
 - **Galatians 3:29:** "If you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - **Romans 4:9-12:** "Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. ¹⁰Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! ¹¹And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. ¹²And he is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised."

This is extremely important. We shouldn't even be talking about Gentile Christians vs. Messianic Jews. There should only be one people of Adonai--not two. Jews who are Jews by blood are to be one with Gentiles who become Israelites by faith. There are numerous Scriptures showing that once we Gentiles believe, we are no longer Gentiles but Israelites! Since we all share the same Hebraic heritage (some by blood and faith, some by faith apart from blood relation), and since we are ONE in Messiah, we should live together and worship together as ONE not as two separate entities with separate lifestyles and worship. We're not Gentiles! We're Israelites! This isn't just symbolic talk. It's literal. Note, I haven't said we're Jews in the flesh! What I'm trying to demonstrate is that we are Israelites according to Adonai's definition of an Israelite! According to Galatians 3:29 and Galatians 4:28 we are Abraham's seed according to the promise.

- **Galatians 3:29:** “If you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
- **Galatians 4:28:** “Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.”
- **Romans 4:16-17:** “Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring--not only to those who are of the law [Jews by birth who believe] but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham [Gentiles who believe]. He is the father of us all [even though we aren't all his blood relatives]. ¹⁷As it is written: **'I have made you a father of many nations.'** He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed--the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.”

The Scriptures also state that we are no longer Gentiles but fellow citizens of Israel.

- **Ephesians 2:11-13:** “Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called ‘uncircumcised’ by those who call themselves ‘the circumcision’ (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- ¹²remember that at that time you [Gentiles] were separate from Messiah, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Messiah Yeshua you who once were far away [Gentiles] have been brought near through the blood of Messiah.”

Did you see it? Before our union in Messiah we **were** (past tense) “excluded from citizenship in Israel.” But now in union with Messiah we’ve obtained citizenship in **Israel**--not a separate entity called the Church!

The Scriptures state that when we come to Messiah, we are to become grafted into olive tree of Israel, not the other way around. As we read Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation note the flow, Gentiles joining something Israelitish!

- **Romans 11:17- 21:** “If some of the branches [unbelieving Jews by blood] have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot [believing Gentiles], have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, ¹⁸do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹You will say then, ‘Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.’ ²⁰Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.”

We used to be Gentiles, but not any longer.

- **I Corinthians 12:2:** ²You know that when you were pagans (Gentiles), somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.

- **Ephesians 3:6:** “This mystery is that through the gospel the *Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body,* and sharers together in the promise in Yeshua the Messiah.”

I saved these next verses for last because they are so powerful. You may think that I’m taking these verses too literally. You may think that we’re Israelites only in a spiritual sense; however, the Bible is very clear on this matter. *Gentiles who have faith are considered Israelites.* This is so clear that the opposite is also true. *Jews by blood who don’t believe in Yeshua as Messiah are literally not considered Israelites!* That’s right. Those who don’t believe essentially lose their Israelite inheritance and are as a pagan in Adonai’s eyes. What if I could show you Scriptures that conclusively show that a Jew by blood who doesn’t believe in Yeshua is not counted in Israel? Would it then be easier to believe that when Gentiles exercise faith they literally become Israelites (children of Abraham)?

- **John 8:33-44:** “They answered him, ‘*We are Abraham’s descendants. . .*’ ‘*Abraham is our father,*’ they answered. ‘*If you were Abraham’s children*’ said Yeshua, ‘*then you would do the things Abraham did.*’ ⁴⁰As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹You are doing the things your own father does. ‘We are not illegitimate children,’ they protested. ‘The only Father we have is God himself.’ ⁴²Yeshua said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. ⁴³Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴*You belong to your father, the devil. . .*”
- **Philippians 3:3:** “For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of Adonai, *who glory in Messiah Yeshua,* and who put no confidence in the flesh-- ⁴though I myself have reasons for such confidence.” Note what Paul is saying. Who are they of the **true** circumcision? Those who glory in Yeshua. *By implication those Jews by blood who don’t “glory in Yeshua Messiah” are not of the true circumcision.*
- **Romans 2:28-29:** “*A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. ²⁹No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code.*”
- **According to Romans 2:28-29 if you are a Gentile and if you have a circumcised heart, you are the real JEW/Israelite! A Jew by blood who doesn’t have a circumcised heart is not a JEW/Israelite!**

From Genesis to Revelation the Scriptures declare that Adonai’s people are not those of the flesh, but of the promise and of the spirit. Think about it. Esau and Jacob were twin brothers. Wasn’t Esau a descendant of Abraham? Yes he was. Yet he was not the child of promise. So, although he was circumcised and had Abraham as his father, in Adonai’s eyes, HE WAS NOT AN HEIR THROUGH THE PROMISE! And that’s LITERAL! By the same token through our faith we become Abraham’s seed even though we may be Gentiles by birth. Who do the Scriptures state are really Adonai’s chosen people?

- **Romans 9:6-13:** “It is not as though God’s word had failed. *For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel* [not all Israelites by blood are true Israelites]. *7Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children* [Note, to be Abraham’s children is also to be Israel]. On the contrary, ‘It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.’ ⁸In other words, *it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring.* ⁹For this was how the promise was stated: ‘At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son.’ ¹⁰Not only that, *but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac.* ¹¹Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad--in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹²not by works but by him who calls--she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ ¹³Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’”

Oh the depth of Adonai’s wisdom! It is critical to understand our (Gentile Christians’) **TRUE** identity; more than lip service, more than head knowledge. Once we see that we are Israelites we will be able to relate properly to the Torah.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE TORAH

Before tackling the subject of whether or not we are subject to the Torah I want to give a few definitions. These definitions have proved to be very enlightening and must be comprehended in order to understand the arguments that follow.

- Tanakh--What we know as the Old Testament. Tanakh is an acronym meaning Torah, Nevi'im (Prophets) and Ketuvim (writings).
- Septuagint--This is a third century translation of the Hebrew Tanakh into Greek by 70 Jewish translators. It is very important because it serves as a link between the Hebrew and Greek languages as seen through Jewish eyes.
- The Torah--The Hebrew word *Torah* literally means teaching, instructions or doctrine. The Septuagint rendered it using the Greek word "nomos," which actually means "law." The original Greek meaning of the word nomos did not mean Adonai's Law as given in the Tanakh. It simply meant law as in a decree, human legislation, etc. Therefore, the context determines whether or not nomos should be translated law, in the sense of a human ordinance, or Torah. The following are sometimes synonymous; the Law, Tanakh, Torah, the Law of Moses.
- The Pentateuch--The first five books of the Bible authored by Moses.
- Torah--This word can mean:
 - The Pentateuch
 - The Pentateuch + The Prophets + The Writings
 - The Pentateuch + The Prophets + The Writings + The Oral Torah which includes the Talmud and other materials

UNDERSTANDING APPARENT BIBLICAL CONTRADICTIONS

Many doctrines of the Bible contain statements that *seem to* contradict each other. Is the answer always either/or? Part of the problem we face when trying to deal with Paul's teachings on the Torah stems from our Western mode of thinking. We view things as black/white, yes/no, and either/or. However, the Jewish mindset is different. It can handle an apparent oxymoron, or contradiction better than a Western mind. In fact, the issue of Law (Torah) vs. grace is but one example of *many* apparent contradictions in the Bible. Another apparent contradiction is that of salvation by faith or by works. The Bible seems to say that both are true.

The Scriptures state that salvation is by faith.

- **Romans 3:28:** "For we maintain that a man is *justified by faith* apart from observing the law."
- **Ephesians 2:8:** "*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith*--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast."

The Scriptures state that salvation is by works.

- **James 2:21:** "Was not our ancestor **Abraham considered righteous for what he did** when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?"
- **James 2:17:** "¹⁷In the same way, *faith by itself*, if it is not accompanied by action, *is dead*."
- **James 2:24:** "You see that a person *is justified by what he does and not by faith alone*."

Now, at first glance it seems as if these passages contradict each other. Immediately our Western minds begin to choose sides. Martin Luther chose *sola fides* (salvation by faith alone). Augustine chose works. Who is right? In a way both are right. The context of these Scripture shows that the authors are talking about faith and works as it applies to the life of the believer in two different stages of maturity. Paul's concern was how one is initially brought into relationship with Adonai. James' concern was how one lives his faith. The Bible speaks of two types of righteousness: 1) *behavioral righteousness*, righteous deeds done by a person and 2) *forensic righteousness*, being righteous in the sense that Adonai has cleared a person of guilt, forgiven their sins, and regenerated them. Forensic righteousness is given to us the moment we're born again. It is the subject that Paul is concerned with. Behavioral righteousness is the subject that James is concerned with. More Scriptures that deal with behavioral righteousness are listed here.

- **Revelation 19:8:** "Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the *righteous acts of the saints*.)"
- **James 1:20:** "²⁰for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that Adonai desires."

- **Matthew 5:19-20:** “Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others *to do* the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”
- **I Timothy 6:11:** “But you, man of Adonai, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.”

Note that the context in the book of James is not how to be made forensically righteous. It is how to live your faith in a practical manner. To just say “I believe” has no practical value.

May we learn a lesson from this example. Just because Scriptures *seem to contradict one another* is not a reason to choose sides, one against the other. **Determine how they are to be harmonized.** The subject of Law (Torah) vs. grace is equally harmonious.

THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE TORAH

Although my goal is to provide Scriptures and arguments to demonstrate that the Torah is still to be obeyed (in the context of the New Covenant, not the Old Covenant) I know that there are many misconceptions concerning it. Therefore, let's settle once and for all what the Bible says about Adonai's Torah. Forget tradition. Let's hear the testimony of Scripture concerning Adonai's Torah. No matter what we currently believe, let's diligently listen to what the Old and New Covenants say concerning the Torah. Once we understand *and believe* what the Bible says about the Torah, then we can progress on with the obvious consequences of that knowledge.

- The Torah is *spiritual*--**Romans 7:14a**: "We know that the law is *spiritual*."
- The Torah is *holy, righteous and good*--**Romans 7:12**: "So then, the law is holy, and the *commandment is holy, righteous and good*."
- From **Psalm 119** we see that the Torah is ... better than gold and silver, faithful, settled in heaven, sweeter than honey, a lamp unto our path, a heritage, strength, wonderful, pure, truth, **eternal**, endures forever.
- From Psalm 119 how are we to relate to the Torah?
 - Hide it in our hearts; don't let us wander from it; rejoice in them; meditate on them; delight in them; keep them; obey them; long for them; let them give us life; help us understand them; they counsel us; hope in them; use them **to walk in liberty**; tell others about them; they comfort us; write them in our hearts; sing them; thank Adonai for them; love them; don't forget them; esteem them highly; lose sleep meditating on them; etc.
- Yeshua and the New Covenant Apostles knew that the entire Torah was perfect. That's why they ascribed to it the greatest of respect. They said that the entire Torah taught two things. Love Adonai with your entire being and love your neighbor as yourself. Pause and think about that. This one message, should it be abolished?
 - **Romans 13:8-10**: "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not covet,' *and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'* ¹⁰Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."
 - **Galatians 5:14**: "The entire law is summed up in a single command: *Love your neighbor as yourself*."
 - **Matthew 27:37-40**: "Yeshua replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰*All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.*"

You have just been presented a Biblical view on the characteristics of the Torah and its relationship to the believer. Based on what you read above, have you detected that the Torah was negative in any way, evil, sinful, old and outdated, needing to be replaced, temporary, something that needed to be "broken down," "abolished," "blotted out," "nailed to Yeshua's

cross,” “taken away,” “only a shadow,” “a rudiment of the world,” “something that’s going to perish with using?” I didn’t think so. Remember, forget any doctrines that are popping into your mind that don’t line up with what you’ve just read. Base your answers on what the Bible says about Adonai’s Torah. As to the question of how a believer is to relate to Adonai’s Torah, base your answers on David’s mindset (see entire Psalm 119), a man after Adonai’s heart.

NEW COVENANT BELIEVERS OBEYED THE TORAH INSTEAD OF ABOLISHING IT

We need to understand how to properly relate to the Torah. Either it's valid or it isn't. As Gentile Christians we're so double-minded about the Torah. On the one hand we say that the Bible teaches us to tithe. But immediately someone objects, "we're not under the Law, we're under grace." We say, "Thou shall not murder" is still valid, but since we're not under Law (Torah) we don't have to keep the Sabbath (remember, keeping of the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments just like 'Thou shall not murder'). Hmm, sounds a little confusing to me. To help us discern truth, let's hear what the Scriptures have to say about the Torah commandments. Were the Torah commandments done away with when Yeshua came, or after He died, or when He ascended or whenever you choose? Is the New Covenant the new "Law" of grace for Christians? Let me make one point. When we read statements in the New Covenant about Adonai's commands or Laws, it's referring to the New and Old Covenant Laws. Remember, when the New Covenant writers wrote their epistles, etc., there was no canon of New Covenant Scriptures. There is evidence within the New Covenant that Peter recognized some of Paul's epistles as Adonai-breathed Scriptures. **II Peter 3:15-16:** "Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother *Paul* also wrote you with the wisdom that Adonai gave him. **16** *He writes* the same way *in all his letters*, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain *some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures*, to their own destruction." I mention it only to let you know that I realize that fact. Nonetheless, many years passed before any New Covenant Scriptures were even written. During that time (literally decades) the New Covenant believers used the Old Covenant Scriptures. That fact alone tells us that the Torah wasn't done away with!

The following assertions are made to show that the Torah with its commandments is still valid and is to be used as a basis of hope, behavior and instruction in righteousness in New Covenant faith.

The Torah is the basis for the Renewed Covenant and is to be obeyed not as delivered by Moses, as a *Law written in stone*, but as delivered by Yeshua, in *grace and truth*. Both the Old and New Covenants provide evidence that the New Covenant is simply the Old Covenant renewed with better promises and an emphasis on the spirit of the Law as opposed to the letter of the Law.

Tanakh (Old Covenant) Texts

- **Jeremiah 31:31:** "The time is coming, declares Adonai, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares Adonai. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts."
- **Ezekiel 36:26:** "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."

These verses *clearly state* that the New Covenant will involve Adonai writing His Torah in the hearts and minds of His people by His Spirit, exactly what the Holy Spirit (the Comforter) does. The context shows it is Torah, not New Covenant principles. This isn't my interpretation. It's what the text says. He's going to write Torah on the hearts of New Covenant believers! The only question remaining is whether or not we will believe what it says. The following Scriptures show that Adonai's original intent was to have His Torah written on the Israelites' hearts and minds.

- **Deuteronomy 6:6:** “⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.”
- **Deuteronomy 11:18:** “Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.”

New Covenant Proof Texts

- **Romans 7:14-25:** “... For in my inner being I delight in Adonai's law... the law of my mind...I myself in my mind am a slave to Adonai's law...”(Clearly, the context of Romans 6 – 8 demonstrates Paul is talking about the Torah)
- **Romans 13:8-10:** “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not covet,’ and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

By walking in love we fulfill the Torah. Note, this verse doesn't state that we aren't accountable to Torah. It states that as we walk in love *we fulfill the Torah.* Why do we need to fulfill the Torah? Because it is still valid!

- **Romans 2:5-16:** “But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of Adonai's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶Adonai will give to each person according to what he has done. ⁷To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. ⁹There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; ¹⁰but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹¹For Adonai does not show favoritism. ¹²All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹³For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. ¹⁴Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵since they

show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

16This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Yeshua Messiah, as my gospel declares.”

- **Revelation 11:18-19:** “The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great--and for destroying those who destroy the earth. 19Then Adonai's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.”

Here we see that when it's time to judge the saints (II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12) and pour wrath on the ungodly, the ark of the testimony in heaven is opened. This is appropriate *since the Torah is in the ark of the testimony* and it will be the basis of judging the saints who've obeyed it (for rewards only, not salvation). Furthermore, it will be the basis for pouring out Adonai's wrath on those who've disobeyed it.

The New Covenant shows that **the Torah** is still to be obeyed in that it is referenced as **the basis (standard) for New Covenant behavior**.

Deuteronomy 25:4 is appealed to as a basis for paying ministers.

- **Deuteronomy 25:4:** “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.”
- **I Corinthians 9:9-11:** “For it is written in the Law of Moses: ‘Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.’ Is it about oxen that God is concerned? 10Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. 11If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? 12If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?”
- **I Timothy 2:17-18:** “The elders who direct the affairs of the Church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. 18For the Scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,’ and ‘The worker deserves his wages.’”

This verse is an excellent example of how Torah is still to be obeyed, not as laws written in stone (For the Torah came through Moses) but as Laws written in our hearts (grace and truth came through Yeshua). Thus, we have revealed the **TRUTH** (or the deeper spiritual meaning that Adonai had in mind all along) that Adonai was concerned with seeing to it that people are paid their proper wages; for the goal of all the commandments is to love your neighbor as yourself.

Isaiah 52:11 is appealed to as a basis for remaining separate from the world.

- **Isaiah 52:11:** “Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing! Come out from it and be pure, you who carry the vessels of Adonai.”
- **II Corinthians 6:16-18:** “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵What harmony is there between Messiah and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living Adonai. As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.’”

Deuteronomy 19:15 and 17:6 are appealed to as a basis for properly handling accusations.

- **Deuteronomy 17:6:** “On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death, but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.”
- **Matthew 18:16:** “But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”
- **II Corinthians 13:1:** “This will be my third visit to you. ‘Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’”
- **I Timothy 5:19:** “Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.”

Exodus 20:12 is appealed to as a basis for children honoring their parents.

- **Exodus 20:12:** “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land God your Elohim is giving you.”
- **Matthew 15:4:** “For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’”
- **Ephesians 6:1-2:** “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²‘Honor your father and mother’--which is the first commandment with a promise.”

Leviticus 19:18 is appealed to as a basis for loving our neighbors.

- **Leviticus 19:18:** “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am Adonai.”
- **Romans 13:9:** “The commandments, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not covet,’ and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ¹⁰Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the Law.”
- **Matthew 19:19:** “Yeshua replied, ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, ¹⁹honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.’”
- **James 2:8:** “If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing right.”

Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7; 20:26 are appealed to as a basis to live holy lives.

- **Leviticus 20:7:** “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”
- **I Peter 1:16:** “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, ¹⁶for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”

Exodus 22:28 is appealed to as a basis for not speaking against a leader.

- **Exodus 22:28:** “Do not blaspheme God or curse the ruler of your people.”
- **Acts 23:5:** “Paul replied, ‘Brothers, I did not realize that he was the high priest; for it is written: Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people.’”

Numerous Scriptures from the Tanakh are referenced as a basis to abstain from idolatry, fornication, strangled animals and blood.

- **Exodus 20:3:** “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, Adonai your Elohim, am a jealous Elohim, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”
- **Acts 15:20:** “Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.”
- **Acts 21:25:** “As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.”
- Also see Genesis 35:2; Exodus 20:23; 34:15; 20:14; Leviticus 20:10.

New Covenant Scriptures state that the Torah is still valid.

- **Romans 3:31:** “Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.”
- **Romans 2:32:** “You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?”
- **Romans 8:1-4:** “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yeshua, ²because through Messiah Yeshua the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, Adonai did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, ⁴in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.”

Romans 8 clearly shows that the Torah still plays a role in the life of a believer--*not, however, as a means of salvation* but *as a moral and ethical guide, obeyed out of love for Adonai* and by the power that the Spirit provides. This is the fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:33-34 (a prophecy of the New Covenant). Adonai's aim in sending his Son was that believers might be enabled to embody the true and full intentions of the Torah according to the Spirit. How can the Torah's righteous requirements be fully met? By no longer letting the sinful nature hold sway but by yielding to the directing and empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit. That is grace!

- **Matthew 23:1-3:** “Then Yeshua said to the crowds and to his disciples: ²The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.”
- **Matthew 5:17-19:** “*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*”
- Matthew 5:17-19 is the most important Scripture of all because it was spoken by Yeshua.
- **Matthew 19:16-19:** “Now a man came up to Yeshua and asked, ‘Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?’ ¹⁷ ‘Why do you ask me about what is good?’ Yeshua replied. ‘There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.’ ¹⁸ ‘Which ones?’ the man inquired. Yeshua replied, ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, ¹⁹honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.’”

As I’ve stated earlier, there is nothing in the New Covenant that wasn’t taught in some manner in the Torah. This is further proof that the Torah was not done away with. Furthermore, it buttresses the fact that the New is the Old (with the Spirit). We often look at the Sermon on the Mount as a New Covenant teaching. Do your own study and see how many verses in that Sermon were already taught in the Torah. In the Sermon on the Mount, not once did Yeshua invalidate the authority of Torah commands in the life of a New Covenant believer. In fact, He explicitly stated 1) that he *didn’t come to destroy the Torah commands*, 2) that until heaven and earth pass away *not one small portion of the Torah would pass away* and 3) that whoever teaches the **Torah** will be great in the kingdom to come whereas anyone who taught people to break the **Torah** or whoever breaks the **Torah** will be least in the kingdom to come. Furthermore, He brought out the higher moral principles that *the Torah* taught.

Most of the confusion concerning whether or not we are still under the Torah revolves around statements that Paul made in some of his letters. Before going on, I think it’s proper to realize that the subject of how New Covenant believers relate to the Torah is one of the more complicated doctrines of Scripture. Yeshua himself taught many things that *seemed* to contradict the Torah. Furthermore, at times He *seemed* not to follow/live the Torah as written. To remove

any doubt about whether or not He was breaking the Torah, He stated in Mat 5:17-19 that **He did not come to abolish the Torah**. I submit to you that Paul's actions and teachings were just as confusing as Yeshua's. In fact, many times Paul defended himself with words similar to Yeshua's. It was Peter who reminded us in **II Peter 3:15-16**. . . "Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." If Paul really taught that the Torah was no longer valid for the New Covenant believer, then we should be able to find clear statements by him repudiating the Torah's validity. To the contrary, all through the New Covenant Paul categorically denies the accusations that he *doesn't* follow the Torah! In other words, if we're no longer under the Torah, and if Paul taught so, then *he had many, many opportunities to say so. He could have put the issue to rest by saying, "Yes, it's true. We're no longer under the Torah."* Instead, we continually find Paul stating the opposite; that he *did* follow the Torah. Paul's actions (*under the grace and truth of the New Covenant*) were just as confusing to the *first century legalists* as they are to us who have made the mistake of choosing *grace apart from Adonai's Torah*.

It is interesting to note that the non-believing Jews accused Paul of teaching Jews (those living among the Gentiles) to apostatize, telling them not to have their sons circumcised and not to follow the traditions. Today, Gentile Christians state that Paul taught (believing Gentiles) that the Torah was abolished. Determine from these Scriptures whether or not Paul thought that the Torah was still valid for all New Covenant believers. Furthermore, decide whether or not Paul himself remained Torah observant all of his days as a believer.

- Paul took a Nazirite vow according to **Acts 18:18**, "Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken."
- Paul continued to be a Pharisee, see **Acts 23:6**: "Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead."
- Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers to participate in the Passover Feast in **I Corinthians 5:7-8**: "Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast--as you really are. For Messiah, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth."
- **Acts 24:14-16**: "However, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, ¹⁵and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. ¹⁶So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man."

- **Acts 21:24:** “Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. *Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law.*”
- **Acts 28:17:** “Three days later he called together the leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: ‘My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans.’”
- **Acts 25:8:** “Then Paul made his defense: ‘I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar.’”
- Since Paul stated in I Corinthians 7:17 that . . . circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing . . . how can he say as stated above that he’s done nothing against “our people or against the customs of our ancestors”? After all, the Torah stated that anyone who wasn’t circumcised would be cut off. Is he confused? I’ll show later how his statements are consistent with the Torah. For now, note that Paul only instructed Gentiles not to circumcise. He never told Jews not to circumcise.

We’ve seen that Paul continued to observe the Torah. Did the other New Covenant saints continue to obey the Torah?

- **Acts 21:17-21:** “When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly. ¹⁸The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: *“You see, brother, how many thousands [literally tens of thousands] of Jews have believed, and **all of them are zealous for the law.**”* Please realize that Acts 21 is well over 20 years after Yeshua’s death.
- **Acts 22:2-16:** “A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there.”
- The Scriptures state that the Torah (including observation of the Feast Days and the Sabbath) will be binding in the millennium. Why should the Torah be done away with during the Church age only to be reinstated during the Millennium?
- **Zechariah 14:16-19:** “Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. ¹⁸*If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.* ¹⁹This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.”
- **Isaiah 66:22-23:** “As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me, declares the LORD, so will your name and descendants endure. ²³From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me, says the LORD.”

- **Isaiah 2:3:** “Many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.’ The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

IT'S THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT VS. THE LETTER, NOT LAW VS. GRACE

The New Covenant is not new in that it is a covenant separate/apart from the Torah. It is “new” in this way; instead of Adonai giving us His Torah written in tablets of stone, He personally writes His *Torah* on our hearts with His Spirit. As one reviews the purpose of the Torah and the necessity of a New Covenant, the question should arise: Why was a New Covenant necessary? Adonai’s word tells us why a New Covenant was necessary. The problem was not the Torah. The writer of Hebrews states explicitly that the “problem” with the Torah was that the people disobeyed it.

- **Hebrews 8:7:** “For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. *8But God found fault with the people...*”

In Romans chapter 7 Paul begins explaining how the Torah, by pointing out sin, made sin alive within us, thus, bringing death. He repeatedly states that the Torah was not thereby sinful when it “revived sin” within men. As with Hebrews 8:7, Paul is showing that the problem was NOT the Torah but the people who refused to obey it!

- **Romans 7:5-13:** “For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. ⁷What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, ‘Do not covet.’ ⁸But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. ⁹Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. ¹²So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. ¹³Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.”

Now let’s use our spiritual common sense again. We have a broken covenant. There’s no problem with Adonai’s side of the deal (His Torah). There is a problem with the people with whom the covenant was made (because of sin they kept breaking it). In order to make the covenant work, which do you change--the Torah or the people. It would seem to me that you would change the portion that has the problem: **THE PEOPLE!** That’s exactly what Adonai did! Romans 8 shows us that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to set us free from the law of sin

and death—not Adonai’s Torah. It was the law of sin and death that caused us to break the Torah. Since people didn’t obey the Torah commandments which were written in stone, He now 1) writes them on our hearts and 2) enables us to obey by the power of His Spirit. These are the two functions of the Holy Spirit. Remember, the saints in the Torah didn’t have the Holy Spirit within them to empower them. In the Tanakh the Holy Spirit was only given to leaders and prophets for ministry empowerment. The personal in-dwelling of the Spirit for all believers was reserved for the New Covenant.

Listed below are examples from the Tanakh, which show that the New Covenant involves Adonai writing His **Torah** (**NOT** “New Covenant” principles) on our hearts.

- **Jeremiah 31:31:** “The time is coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them, declares the LORD. This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the LORD. I will put my Torah in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”
- **Ezekiel 36:26:** “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”

In context these verses clearly show that the New Covenant involves the ministry of the Holy Spirit writing the Torah on the hearts and minds of New Covenant believers!

Examples from the New Covenant show the New Covenant involves Adonai writing His Torah on our hearts.

- **Hebrews 8:6:** “But the ministry Yeshua has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But Adonai found fault with the people and said: ‘The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my Torah in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, know the Lord, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.”

- **Romans 7:6:** “But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.”

It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to write Adonai’s Torah on the heart of the New Covenant believer. Saints (as a whole) in the Tanakh did not have the Holy Spirit as we now have. They weren’t baptized in the Holy Spirit. Only those in leadership had the spirit rest on them for ministry.

- **Numbers 11:17-29:** “...But Moses replied, ‘Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD'S people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!’”

The New Covenant teaches that “The Promise of the Father” given to Abraham in the Torah was not limited to salvation by faith in Messiah. In fact, the promise was for the outpouring of the Spirit in the lives of Adonai’s entire congregation.

- The promise was given in **Genesis 12:1-3:** “The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’”
- Paul states that the promise of Genesis 12:1-3 was for the gift of the Holy Spirit. **Galatians 3:14:** “He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Messiah Yeshua, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”
- The promise of the Spirit was referred to by John the Baptist and Yeshua also...
 - **Matthew 3:11:** “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”
 - **John 7:38-39:** “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. ³⁹By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Yeshua had not yet been glorified.”
 - **Acts 1:8:** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
 - **Luke 24:48-49:** “You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

The New Covenant teaches that the purpose of the Holy Spirit is to teach us.

- **John 16:12-13:** “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.”

- **I John 2:20:** “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth,” and **I John 2:27:** “As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit--just as it has taught you, remain in him.”
 - The connection between the statement *that “you do not need anyone to teach you”* in I John 2:27 and “*No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'know the Lord,' because they will all know me*” from Jeremiah 31 is an obvious reference to the fact that it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to write Adonai’s Torah on our hearts.

The ministry of the Spirit is also to empower us to obey.

- **Romans 8:2:** “...because through Messiah Yeshua the law of the *Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*”
- **Romans 8:11-13:** “And if the Spirit of him who raised Yeshua from the dead is living in you, he who raised Messiah from the dead will also *give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.* ¹²Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation--but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. ¹³For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if *by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body,* ¹⁴you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”

Hebrews 8:6b teaches that the New Covenant has been given as *Torah*. Wondering where your Bible says that? You won’t find it because most translations mistranslate this verse. Why, possibly because most translators believe that Christians are “free from the Law”? This possibly is an example of how incorrect theology could effect a translation.

Bible translation acronyms:

- King James Version (KJV)
- Young’s Literal Translation (YLT)
- New International Version (NIV)
- New American Standard Bible (NASB)
- WE (World English)
- Revised Standard Version (RSV)
- Complete Jewish Bible (CJB). David Stern author.

First, let’s look at some translations.

- YLT... and now he hath obtained a more excellent service, how much also of *a better covenant is he mediator, which on better promises hath been sanctioned,*
- NIV--But the ministry Yeshua has received is as superior to theirs as *the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.*

- NASB--But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as *He is also the ^{*}mediator of ^{*}a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.*
- KJV--But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also *he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*
- RSV--But as it is, Messiah has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as *the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.*
- WE--But now he has got a more excellent ministry, by so much as he is mediator of *a better covenant, which is established on the footing of better promises.*
- Darby--But Messiah has been given a much better work, because he is the man who is between Adonai and men in making an agreement. *This is a much better agreement. It was made by better promises.*
- CJB--But now the work Yeshua has been given to do is far superior to theirs, just as the covenant he mediates is better. *For this covenant has been given as Torah on the basis of better promises.*

In the KJV passage above, the Greek word translated “established” is “*nenomothetetai*.” This is a compound word formed from “*nomos*” and “*tithemi*.” “*Tithemi*” means “lay, put, place, make.” As I’ve stated earlier the word *nomos* means law in general, but *Torah* when the context requires that interpretation. In a non-Jewish context it should mean “to make law,” i.e. to legislate or enact law. However, in a Jewish context, and specifically in the book of Hebrews, *nomos* should properly be translated *Torah*. Other compound words related to this one are used in the New Covenant and they always refer to the *Torah*.

- **James 4:12:** “¹²There is only one *Lawgiver* and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy.”

The Greek word translated “Lawgiver” is “*nomothetes*.” This too is a compound word from *nomos*. The verse clearly shows that Adonai is the one who gives the *Torah*. The context shows that James is not talking about human law, but *Torah*.

- **Romans 9:4:** “Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, *the receiving of the law*, the temple worship and the promises.

The Greek word translated “the receiving of the Law” is “*nomothesia*.” This too is a compound word from *nomos*. This phrase “the receiving/giving of the Law clearly speaks of the giving of a Law to Israel. The context shows that Paul is not talking about human law, but *Torah*. In fact, according to David Stern:

“In the Septuagint ‘*nomothetein*,’ which is the active voice of the verb in our verse [Romans 9:4], is used more than a dozen times to mean ‘instruct,’ the context always implying ‘instruct in *Torah*’ (and at the same time implying that instruction in *Torah* involves not only the legal component but the full range of God’s ‘Teaching’ – the literal translation of ‘*Torah*’).”¹

The original word we began to look at, *nenomothetetai is used in one other place in the New Covenant*. It is used in *Hebrews 7:11*. I will list every translation for you. Please review how this word was translated in Hebrews 8:6 above, then note how it's translated below.

- YLT--If indeed, then, perfection were through the Levitical priesthood--for the people under *it had received law*--what further need, according to the order of Melchizedek, for another priest to arise, and not to be called according to the order of Aaron?
- NIV--If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it *the law was given* to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come--one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron?
- NASB--Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people *received the Law*), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?
- KJV--If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the *people received the law*.) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?
- Darby--Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people *received the law*), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchiz'edek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?
- WE--It was while the sons of Levi were priests that *the law was made* for the people. If those priests were good enough, why would another priest need to come who was like Melchizedek? Why would he not be like Aaron?
- Darby--If indeed then perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, for the people *had their law given to them* in connexion with *it*, what need [was there] still that a different priest should arise according to the order of Melchizedec, and not be named after the order of Aaron?

Note how each translator stated that the people had “received the Law,” or had “the Law given to them,” the obvious implication was the Law as in Torah. I have one question. Why wasn't Hebrews 8:6 translated that the New Covenant was “given as the Law?” Could incorrect theology and centuries of anti-Semitism in the Church be the culprit. I personally think that the translators couldn't translate the *obvious* meaning because their theology wouldn't allow it. The anti-Semitism that started with the Church Fathers as a small amount of leaven has truly worked its way through the batch. I pray that Adonai would open the eyes of everyone who reads this, even as my eyes were opened when I was confronted with His truth.

The statement “the New Covenant has been given as Torah,” has far-reaching implications. The New Covenant, which is the Torah (Old Covenant) 1) renewed and 2) written on our hearts by the Spirit, helps complete the Torah even as Yeshua said He came to do (Matthew 5:17-19). It means that non-Messianic Jews are in disobedience by not believing in their Messiah. Furthermore, it means that we Gentile Christians have been engrafted into the olive tree of Israel

and called out to be Torah observant. Yes! Torah observant, not as under the Old Covenant, but as under the Renewed Covenant!

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TORAH, FAITH AND JUSTIFICATION

Before dealing with passages that apparently assign negative attributes to the Torah and works of the Law, it is best to see how the Old and New Covenants view the relationship between the Torah, works of the Law, justification and faith. Furthermore, you may want to quickly review section VII, which unequivocally showed that the Torah is eternal and perfect. This is important because the Scriptures that *seemingly* assign negative attributes to the Torah must be interpreted in light of the overwhelming number of Scriptures that demonstrate the **absolute eternity and perfection of the Torah.** The current translations show apparent contradictions between the Torah and the New Covenant of “grace,” just as there are apparent contradictions as to whether or not we are saved by grace or faith. Instead of choosing between one or the other, we must 1) examine context and 2) make interpretations based on what the whole Bible has to say about the subject.

The Old and New Covenants both define the purpose of the Torah. It is important to understand why the Torah was given. Maybe this will help us to understand it so that we can relate to it properly. It was given to make the Jewish people ever aware of their sin so that they would gladly receive the forgiveness in Messiah.

The Torah was introduced to teach us what sin is:

- **Romans 7:7:** “What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, ‘Do not covet.’”
- **Romans 3:20:** “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.”

The Torah was added to teach us how to love our neighbor:

- **Galatians 5:14:** “The entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbor as yourself.”

The Torah was added to restrain sin:

- **Galatians 3:19:** “What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.”

Both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant state that justification and the imputation of righteousness to an individual (whether they are an Old Covenant believer or a New Covenant believer) is based on faith not works.

- **Genesis 15:4-6:** “Then the word of the LORD came to him: ‘This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.’⁵ He took him

outside and said, 'Look up at the heavens and count the stars--if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' 6Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness."

- **Habakkuk 2:4:** "...but the righteous will live by his faith..."
- **Romans 4:4-8:** "Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵However, to the man who does not work but trusts God [or has faith] who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. ⁶David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ⁸Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him (quoted from Psalm 32:1-2)."
- **Galatians 2:15-16:** "We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' ¹⁶know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Messiah Yeshua. So we, too, have put our faith in Messiah Yeshua that we may be justified by faith in Messiah and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified."
- **Romans 3:28:** "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law."

As you can see both the Old and New Covenant plainly declare that man is justified and imputed righteousness by faith. The Torah never stated that people were justified by works of the Torah (apart from faith). And that's the key, apart from faith. It should be understood that works done apart from faith (trusting Adonai) are works done in self-righteousness.

Both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant teach that justification, forgiveness of sins and the imputation of righteousness to an individual (whether they are an Old Covenant believer or a New Covenant believer) is based on the reception of grace. As Gentile Christians, most of us believe that we are "no longer under Law" but "under grace," as if grace is a New Covenant phenomenon. Part of the confusion concerns Romans 6:14, which I will deal with later. More confusion is caused by not understanding John 1:17.

- **John 1:16-17:** "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Messiah Yeshua. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known."

The KJV translates verse 17 as, "For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Messiah Yeshua." Whenever you see a word in Italics in the KJV, it means that that word was not in the Greek manuscript. It was added by the translator(s).

We've already looked at Scriptures that unanimously declare the Torah to be holy, righteous, good, eternal and perfect. In fact, the Torah testifies and points the way to Yeshua. So why would the translator(s) feel the need to insert the word "*but*" as if to imply that the Torah was inferior and without grace and truth? It's the result of the negative view of the Torah, that it was

intrinsically inferior to the New Covenant. The Torah, grace and truth are all from Adonai and all are good. The grace and truth revealed by Yeshua were all based on the Torah! Read the Sermon on the Mount where Yeshua brought out the deeper spiritual meanings of the Torah.

Romans 3:22-26 will help us determine whether or not grace is a New Covenant concept separate from the Old Covenant.

- **Romans 3:22-26:** “. 22This righteousness from God comes through faith in Yeshua Messiah to all who believe. There is no difference, 23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Yeshua Messiah. 25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand (i.e., under the Old Covenant) unpunished-- 26he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

This verse clearly shows that the most important “grace” that we can receive was bestowed upon “all,” meaning the Old and New Covenant saints. Yeshua’s sacrifice is the basis for Adonai having justified the Old Covenant saints as well as the New Covenant saints. Grace for salvation and justification is not a New Covenant concept. It’s found in the Old Covenant too. The presence of grace is taught throughout the Old Covenant. The Hebrew word “chanan,” meaning grace, is sometimes translated mercy, lovingkindness or favor.

- **Genesis 6:8:** “But Noah found favor [grace] in the eyes of the LORD.”

The most important difference between grace in the New Covenant vs. the Old is that we now have the Holy Spirit to 1) write His Torah on our hearts and 2) empower us to obey His commandments.

When the Scriptures state that we aren’t justified by “works of the Law,” or “observing the Law” what types of works of the Law are they referring to? The answer to this question is central in understanding Paul’s apparent ambivalence to the Torah. This next section is the most important section in this paper. Without grasping this section you will fail to understand that Paul was not ambivalent concerning the Torah. Please, please read carefully and thoughtfully. The following discussion is based on Romans 3:20a.

Romans 3:20a:

- (NIV) “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law...”
- (KJV) “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight...”

These phrases “observing the Law” and “deeds/works of the Law” and their misunderstanding are the foundation for most of the incorrect theology concerning Law (Torah) vs. grace. In these

phrases, “Law” is understood to be Jewish Law, the Law of Moses and the Torah. And that is correct, so far. But this verse is usually ascribed one of three misinterpretations. I will reword the verse so as to draw attention to the misinterpretations.

No one will be declared righteous by doing the good works commanded in the Torah.

I believed this in the past. After all isn't that what the verse states? Well, think about it. Let me state it another way. ***No one will be declared righteous who obeys Adonai's holy, eternal, and perfect Torah, not in a legalistic spirit, but with an attitude of humility and faith in Adonai.***

Get my point. If the person in the preceding sentence isn't imputed righteousness, then no one can. If my bold type re-wording of Romans 3:20a is true as written, then it is stating that no one in the Old Covenant was declared righteous! Has the light bulb gone on yet? Don't you see that Romans 3:20b, with the phrase, “works/deeds of the Law,” couldn't possibly be interpreted as I've stated it? However, at face value, doesn't that seem to be its obvious meaning? Obviously, “works/deeds of the Law” must mean something other than true faithful obedience to Adonai's commands! It couldn't possibly mean that if a person did what Adonai commanded IN FAITH that he still wouldn't be declared righteous! The most important works that the Torah commanded were to love Adonai and our neighbor as ourselves, in an attitude of trusting faithfulness to Adonai. That was the entire message of the Torah. Moses stated in **Leviticus 18:5** that “the person who does these things,” *who does the righteous works commanded by the Torah*, “will attain life through them.” Surely attaining life is equivalent to obtaining Adonai's righteousness. So as you see, what seemed to have been the most obvious interpretation sounds ridiculous when you analyze it. Was not Yeshua found to be righteous because He fulfilled the Torah without sinning. Remember Yeshua's response when John the Baptist initially refused to baptize Him? Yeshua stated it was necessary for Him to be baptized to “fulfill all righteousness,” i.e., to fulfill the righteous requirements of the Torah. Yeshua is the only human who ever fulfilled everything the Torah required WITHOUT SIN. The end result was that He was declared righteous! It should be plain to anyone that someone who ***obeys Adonai's holy, eternal, and perfect Torah, not in a legalistic spirit, but with an attitude of humility and faith in Adonai*** will indeed be declared righteous. And that person was Yeshua.

No one will be declared righteous by doing the good works commanded in the Torah because no one can live up to its demands.

This too is absurd since the Torah was given to be obeyed. Deuteronomy 30:11-14: “Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. ¹²It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, ‘Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?’ ¹³Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, ‘Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?’ ¹⁴No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.” Furthermore, Adonai instituted the sacrificial system so that if anyone fell short of the commandments he could be brought back into right standing with Adonai. Through repentance and faith in the efficacy of the blood sacrifice, the Old Covenant believer could maintain a right relationship with Adonai.

No one will be declared righteous by doing the bad works commanded in the Torah. This misinterpretation is ludicrous! We've already seen that the Torah is eternal, perfect and holy.

There are no bad works in it. If this were true then Yeshua would be unrighteous since He obeyed every Torah command without sinning one time.

I think interpretation #1 is the most prevalent. Why do we Gentile Christians think that no one will be declared righteous in Adonai's sight by obeying the Torah? Because somewhere in our Christian walk we've picked up the notion that the Torah is inferior to the New Covenant. We've been taught that the Torah is inferior, inadequate, legalistic, separate from Adonai's grace and abolished. So what does Romans 3:20b, especially the phrase "works/deeds of the Law," really mean? It simply means works of the Torah done as follows:

- With boasting
- With self-righteousness
- **Without faith or trust in Adonai**
- As a means of gaining Adonai's favor
- Trusting only yourself
- Without love for Adonai or our neighbor
- As legalistic observance to Torah commands

Get it? Does Romans 3:20b make sense now? Let me re-state Romans 3:20a as based on the arguments I've presented.

- "Therefore by the deeds of the law performed with pride and boasting there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."
- "Therefore by the deeds of the law performed in self-righteousness there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."
- "Therefore by the deeds of the law performed without faith or trust in Adonai there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."
- "Therefore by the deeds of the law as a means of gaining Adonai's favor there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."
- "Therefore by the deeds of the law to show how good and deserving you are of heaven for your reward there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."
- "Therefore by the deeds of the law and trust in yourself there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."
- "Therefore by the deeds of the law without love for Adonai or your neighbor there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."
- "Therefore by the deeds of the law as legalistic observance of Torah commands there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..."

Therefore my previous rendering of Romans 3:20a is not correct--***No one will be declared righteous who totally obeys Adonai's holy, eternal, and perfect Torah, not in a legalistic spirit, but with an attitude of humility and faith in Adonai.*** However, for a Torah saint the following statement is very, very true-- ***Anyone will be declared righteous who obeys Adonai's holy, eternal, and perfect Torah, not in a legalistic spirit, but with an attitude of humility and faith in Adonai.***

Remember, James 1:26 states, "... so faith without works/deeds is dead." The point that Paul is trying to make is that works apart from faith are dead.

It is now easy to see that Paul's contention was with works done in a spirit of legalism. Another way of stating this is that he was fighting against works done apart from faith. Obviously, if anyone does works in a legalistic manner, boasting, and apart from love for Adonai and our fellow man, then those works are done without faith. For as faith without works is dead, so are works without faith dead.

Unfortunately, Gentile Christianity has misinterpreted some of Paul's statements and developed an entire theology that says, "The Torah was abolished," and "Messiah is the end of the Torah." This has occurred because we left our Hebraic roots. Anti-Semitism gave rise to poor theology, which gave rise to (some) poor translations with the final result-misunderstanding. For example, Yeshua stated very clearly in **Matthew 5:17-19**: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Sounds like the Torah wasn't abolished to me. How about you? But then we read in **Romans 10:4**: "Messiah is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes." Hmm. Sounds like a contradiction (I'll have more to say about Romans 10:4 later). It looks like we have a choice. So which one will we choose and why? During the first few centuries after the apostles died, the reason Gentile Christians didn't choose to follow Torah was probably because of anti-Semitism. Nowadays, it's mainly because of tradition (1,900 years worth) and because we view the Torah carnally. When confronted with obedience to the Torah we immediately have the following types of thoughts:

- I couldn't eat shrimp or bacon?!
- What about all those crazy laws concerning cleansing, etc.?

And the list goes on. Further evidence to confirm that Paul understood "works/deeds of the Law" to be works done in a legalistic manner without faith can be found in the Torah. In fact, if the Israelites had been like we Gentile Christians, they could have used the following as proof texts to show that Adonai really didn't want animal sacrifices any more.

- **Hosea 6:4-6**: "What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your love is like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears. ⁵Therefore I cut you in pieces with my prophets, I killed you with the words of my mouth; my judgments flashed like lightning upon you. ⁶For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings."
- **Isaiah 1:11-17**: "'The multitude of your sacrifices--what are they to me?' says the LORD. 'I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. ¹²When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts?"

- 13* Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations--I cannot bear your evil assemblies. *14* Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. *15* When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; *16* wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, *17* learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.”
- **Jeremiah 7:21-23:** “This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Go ahead, add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat yourselves! *22* For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt and spoke to them, *I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices, *23* but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.*”
 - **Micah 6:8:** “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”
 - **I Samuel 15:22-23:** “But Samuel replied: *‘Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.* *23* For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.”
 - **Psalms 51:16-17:** “You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. *17* The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

At first glance it seems that the prophets are directly contradicting Adonai’s commands for animal sacrifice. Upon closer examination, it’s easy to discern that Adonai’s ultimate purpose was for sacrifice to be coupled with obedience and faithfulness. Apart from faith and obedience the sacrifices meant nothing. Or to put it another way, to obey the Torah concerning animal sacrifice legalistically, thinking they would secure blessings apart from obedience to, and faith in Adonai, was wrong. Works without faith (and by implication according to the letter/legalistically) are dead.

More evidence to confirm that Paul meant “works/deeds of the Law” to be works done in a legalistic manner without faith can be found in the synoptic gospel accounts of Yeshua’s confrontations with the Pharisees. They thought that their blood descent from Abraham and their legalistic observance of the Torah would guarantee them eternal life. Using our understanding of “works/deeds of the Law” as legalistic observance of the Torah apart from faith, we see that the Pharisees exhibited every aspect listed in section D.3.

- **John 5:39-40:** “You diligently study the Scriptures *because you think that by them you possess eternal life.* These are the Scriptures that testify about me, *40* yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”

- **Matthew 12:3-8:** “He answered, ‘Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry?’ ⁴He entered the house of Adonai, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread--which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. ⁵Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? ⁶I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. ⁷If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the innocent. ⁸For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”
- **Matthew 15:3-6:** “Yeshua replied, ‘And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? ⁴For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ ⁵But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,’ ⁶he is not to ‘honor his father’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition.”
- **Portions of Matthew 23:** “...Then Yeshua said to the crowds and to his disciples: ²‘The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. ⁴They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. ⁵Everything they do is done for men to see... ²³Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices--mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law--justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. ²⁴You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. ²⁵Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. ²⁷Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. ²⁸In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness ...”

In the passages above Yeshua told His disciples to obey the Law of Moses as taught by the Pharisees. His caution was that they not do what the Pharisees do, being that the Pharisees were hypocrites. Not once did he say the Torah was burdensome. However, look at the language He uses concerning the legalistic perversion of the Torah. It’s the legalistic perversion of the Torah that is a “heavy load [burden or yoke]” upon men, *not* the Torah. It’s the legalistic perversion of the Torah that causes one to neglect the weightier matters of the Torah like justice, mercy and faithfulness, while giving to much attention to minute details. It’s the legalistic perversion of the Torah that caused the Pharisees to strain at gnats and swallow camels. It’s the legalistic perversion of the Torah that caused the Pharisees to be so concerned with outward cleanliness instead of inner purity.

One of the greatest examples of the perversion of the Torah was when the chief priests refused to put Judas' money in the treasury stating that accepting it would be a violation of the Torah since it was "blood money." They are the very ones who condemned Yeshua to death, spat on Him, struck Him with their fists and mocked Him.

The point I'm trying to make is that the Torah, the gospel accounts and the epistles all state the same thing with one accord. Can you see the picture the entire Bible is painting? Works of the Law 1) apart from faith, 2) done in legalism, 3) without love for Adonai or our fellow man, are sin. Works done 1) in faith and 2) with love are what the entire Bible teaches that we should do.

UNDERSTANDING PAUL'S TERMS FOR WORKS OF THE LAW

The following discussion is based on information found in *the Jewish New Testament Commentary* by David Stern.² I would prefer not to use arguments based on the Greek texts; however, I believe that it would be beneficial. Although I don't read Greek, I think that certain arguments based on the Greek text will provide more information for the reader to make a more informed decision.

The Hebrew word *Torah* literally means instructions or teachings. The Greek word *nomos* was used to translate the Hebrew word *Torah* when the Tanakh was translated into Greek (the Septuagint). The Greek word *nomos* literally means "law," as in legal instructions. Thus, when reading the Greek it is necessary to examine the context to determine whether the writer is referring to a man-made law (the true sense of the Greek word) or the Torah (Law of Moses).

Paul uses the term *en nomo*, properly translated "in law." It can be translated "in connection with the Law," or "within the framework of the Law," to promote the idea of someone who is living according to the Torah. This is a person living according to the Torah and relating to it properly (faith demonstrated by works, and works done in faith to Adonai), e.g., Yeshua, Mary, David etc. This is not the phrase Paul uses to indicate someone living in legalistic bondage to the Torah, e.g., the Pharisees. In the following three verses Paul uses *en nomos* to communicate the idea of someone living within the framework of the Torah (*i.e., someone obeying Adonai's holy, eternal, and perfect Torah, not in a legalistic spirit but with an attitude of humility and faith in Adonai*).

- **Romans 2:12:** "All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law."
- **Romans 3:19:** "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to Adonai."
- **I Corinthians 9:21:** "To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from Adonai's law but am under Messiah's law), so as to win those not having the law."

Paul uses the phrase *upo nomon*, literally "under law," to express the idea of someone living under the bondage of legalism or legalistic interpretation of Adonai's Holy Torah. Although *upo* can have the neutral sense meaning "in the framework of" (e.g., under his tutelage), it can also have the negative connotation of oppression as in "in subjection to," or "burdened by." When Paul used the phrase *upo nomos* he is clearly bringing the oppressive and subjugative sense of the word. Evidence for this is that *upo nomon* typically occurs in the context of oppression, slavery, imprisonment, or being controlled by evil desires.

- **Romans 3:9:** "What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin."
- **Romans 6:14:** "For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace."

- **Galatians 4:3:** “So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.”

Note that in Romans 6:14 under grace is followed by the exhortation to yield ourselves unto obedience as slaves of righteousness.

When Paul uses the Greek phrase *erga nomou*, literally “works of law,” translated “works/deeds of the law,” he does not mean works done in obedience to the Torah as Adonai prescribed them, in faith. He means works done as a consequence of legalistic perversion of the Torah. We’ve already seen in section X.D. that “works/deeds of the Law” cannot mean deeds done in obedience to the Torah as Adonai prescribed them. The Greek words used in Romans 3:20a are *erga nomou*. Paul, uses this phrase to mean legalistic works done apart from faith to earn righteousness. This is abundantly clear if we realize that Paul and Yeshua always had positive things to say about the Torah, but negative things to say about its legalistic perversion. It is unfortunate that most translations do not recognize this point. It has been the cause of so much misunderstanding. The Complete Jewish Bible translates Romans 3:20b as follows:

“For in his sight no one alive will be considered righteous on the ground of legalistic observance of Torah commands, because what Torah really does is show people how sinful they are.”

You may think that using a Messianic Jew’s interpretations are not as compelling. So I will give you quotations from two Gentile Christian scholars concerning this “works/deeds of the law” issue. There is one reason why we have not heard more on this subject from Gentile Christians. It is because most Christian leaders do not want to hear it, choosing instead to believe that “we are free from the Law.” The following quotes are taken from the *Jewish New Testament Commentary* by David Stern.

“So that my defense of this interpretation will not appear to be special pleading. I make my case by quoting from two distinguished Gentile Christian scholars without any Messianic Jewish axe to grind. C.E.B. Cranfield, in his commentary on the book of Romans, writes:

“...it will be well to bear in mind the fact (which, so far as we know, had not received attention before it was noted in [Cranfield’s article in] the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Volume 17, 1964, p. 55) that the Greek language of Paul’s day possessed no word-group corresponding to our ‘legalism,’ ‘legalist’ and ‘legalistic.’ This means that he lacked a convenient terminology for expressing a vital distinction, and so was surely seriously hampered in the work of clarifying the Christian position with regard to the law. In view of this, we should always, we think, be ready to reckon with the possibility that Pauline statements which at first sight seem to disparage the law, were really directed not against the law itself but against that misunderstanding and misuse of it for which we now have a convenient terminology. In this very difficult terrain Paul was pioneering. If we make due allowance for these circumstances, we shall not be so easily baffled or misled by a certain impreciseness of statement which we shall sometimes

encounter (C.E.B Cranfield, *The International Critical Commentary, Romans*, 1979, P. 853).”

Cranfield is right—except for his speculation that he was the first. Forty-three years earlier Ernest De Witt Burton, in his classic commentary on Galatians, also made clear that in the present verse “nomos” means “legalism” and not Adonai’s *Torah*:

“Nomou is here evidently used...in its legalistic sense, denoting divine law viewed as a purely legalistic system made up of statutes, on the basis of obedience or disobedience to which men are approved or condemned as a matter of debt without grace. This is divine law as the legalist defined it. In the apostle’s thought it stands for a reality only in that it constitutes a single element of the divine law detached from all other elements and aspects of divine revelation; by such detachment it misrepresents the will of Adonai and his real attitude towards men. By *erga nomou* Paul means deeds of obedience to formal statutes done in the legalistic spirit, with the expectation of thereby meriting and securing divine approval and award, such obedience, in other words, as the legalists rendered to the law of the Old Covenant as expanded and interpreted by them. Though *nomos* in this sense had no existence as representing the basis of justification in the divine government, yet *erga nomou* had a very real existence in the thought and practice of men who conceived of the divine law after this fashion.... The translation of this phrase here and constantly...by ‘the works of the law’...is a serious defect of [versions that have it] (E. Burton, *The International Critical Commentary, Galatians*, 1921, p. 120).”³

Although this may seem new to you, there are other Christian scholars who have long understood that we are not “free from the Law” as is popularly taught in most Christian groups today.

PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE THAT APPARENTLY VIEW THE TORAH AS NEGATIVE

Certain decisions and statements made at the Jerusalem council are often quoted as “proving” that we are no longer “under the Law.” Furthermore, this Scripture is used to state that the Torah was a burden.

1) Acts 15: 1-11: “¹Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: ‘**Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.**’ ²This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ³The Church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the brothers very glad. ⁴When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the Church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them. ⁵Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, ‘The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the Law of Moses.’ ⁶The apostles and elders met to consider this question. ⁷After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: ‘Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. ⁸ God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. ⁹He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples **a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?** ¹¹No! **We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Yeshua that we are saved, just as they are.**’”

It is plain to see from verse one that the question under consideration (see end of verse 2) was not whether the Gentiles needed to obey the Torah. The question was **whether or not** Gentile believers needed to be circumcised “according to the custom taught by Moses” TO BE SAVED! The yoke spoken of in verse ten is not the Torah, but the legalistic perversion of it requiring the Gentiles to perform a work to EARN salvation. Further proof is given in verse eleven where Peter states that it is through “the **GRACE** of our Lord Yeshua that we are **SAVED**” in contradistinction to salvation by the **WORK** of being circumcised. That is, grace apart from legalistic perversion of the Torah. Again, the question under consideration was “How is one saved,” not “Should one keep the *Torah*?” The answer, given by Peter is that we’re SAVED by the grace of our Adonai Yeshua!

Note also that this yoke of legalism was prescribed by men. It is a commandment/ doctrine of men. If followed it would have nullified the Word of Adonai as Paul later explained in Galatians.

We've already seen in Section X that Romans 3:20 teaches that "works/deeds of the law" were not faithful obedience to Adonai's commandments, but the legalistic perversion of them.

2) Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace."

Romans 6:14 is an excellent example of how Paul uses the Greek construction *upo nomon* to indicate legalistic observance of the Law. The point is that we are to live *en*, "within the framework of" the Law instead of *upo*, "in subjection to" legalism.

3) Romans 7:4: "So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Messiah, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to Adonai."

I have some questions. Which part of the Torah have we died to?

- The part that teaches us to love Adonai with all of our hearts?
- The part that teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves?
- The part that speaks of the redemptive work of Yeshua?
- The parts that are spiritual, righteous, holy, and good as Paul states?
- The parts that David spoke of in Psalm 119. The parts we are to...1) Hide it in our hearts, 2) rejoice in, 3) meditate on, 4) delight in, 5) obey, 6) long for, 7) understand, 8) hope in, 9) tell others about, 10) write on our hearts, 11) sing of, 12) thank Adonai for, 13) love, 14) not forget, 15) esteem, and 16) lose sleep because we're constantly meditating on, etc.

GET MY POINT? I'm trying to show that the things listed in section one above are not things we should need to die to. Why would it make any (spiritual) common sense to die to any of the things listed in section one? I submit to you that we've died to certain aspects of the Torah, not the entire Torah. Which parts of the Torah do you think we should need to die to? Or, which parts of the Torah has the vicarious death of Yeshua allowed us to die to? Paul explains that we've died to three aspects of the Torah.

- **Its capacity to stir up sin within us (vv. 5-14).** Paul shows that apart from the Torah sin is dead. Verses 5-14 demonstrate that the Torah had within it the capacity to "stir up sin" with humans. Note it's a weakness with us, not the Torah. We have died to this aspect of the Torah through Yeshua's death because now we have the Spirit of Adonai to write His laws in our minds and hearts and empower us to live victoriously!
- **Its capacity to produce guilt feelings (vv. 15-25).** Verses 15-25 show that there is another law, called the law of sin and death, which holds us in bondage and produces guilt. This law of sin and death is somehow activated by Adonai's Torah. However, we have died to this aspect of the Law through Yeshua's death because now we have the Spirit of Adonai to write His laws in our minds and hearts and empower us to live

victoriously! For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has set us free from (i.e., we've died to) the law of sin and death.

- **Its penalties, curses and punishments (8:1-4).** This verse taken with **Galatians 3:13**: “Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree,” shows how we’ve died to the Law. Thus, we have died to all of the curses, penalties, and condemnation found in the Torah through our union with Yeshua. Further evidence that we died only to certain aspects of the Torah and not the entire Torah is found in Paul’s argument in verses 7:1-4.

4) Romans 7:1-4: “Do you not know, brothers--for I am speaking to men who know the law--that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? ²For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. ³So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man. ⁴So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Messiah, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to Adonai.”

The death of the woman’s husband freed her from one aspect of the Torah, her marriage. It did not free her from all other obligations of the Torah. So likewise, we’ve been freed from certain aspects of the Torah, listed above. All other aspects of the Torah are still to be fulfilled in our lives; such as **James 2:8**: “If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, Love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing right.”

5) Galatians 2:10-14: “¹⁰All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.’ ¹¹Clearly no one is justified before Adonai by the law, because, ‘The righteous will live by faith.’ ¹²The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, ‘The man who does these things will live by them.’ ¹³Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.’ ¹⁴He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Messiah Yeshua, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”

Verse 10--As I’ve shown earlier, Adonai expected everyone to obey His Torah. He had provisions in it for forgiveness of sin when necessary. Thus “observing the law” must mean legalistic observance of the Torah. This verse is not saying that if you fail any one Torah, you’re under a curse! It’s stating that anyone who trusts in the legalistic perversion of the Torah for justification will not be saved. Why? Because the Torah itself states that you’re imputed righteousness (and by implication, justified) through faith, not by works.

Verse 11--Here's the proof that the Torah taught justification by faith, not legalistic works.

Verse 12--Obviously following Adonai's Torah is to be based on faith as Habakkuk 2:4 clearly states. It is legalistic perversion of the Torah that is not based on faith. It's basing our salvation on works that are not based on faith. In fact, this is the heresy of most religions and the heresy of most unbelievers. They feel that Adonai will "let them into heaven" *because of their good works!*

6) II Corinthians 3:4-11: "Such confidence as this is ours through Messiah before God. ⁵Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. ⁶He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant--not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ⁷Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, ⁸will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? ⁹If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! ¹⁰For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. ¹¹And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!"

In this text it appears that the Torah could be viewed negatively since it is said to produce death. Since we know that Paul believes the Torah to be holy, eternal and perfect, what point is he trying to make? The Torah brought death in the following ways:

- It stated that death was the penalty for sin.
- While it teaches us what sin is, it "increases" sin, and thus, death.
- It provides an opportunity for sinful people to pervert the Torah into a system of legalistic perversion.
- It doesn't have within itself the life-giving power to make people righteous.

The point Paul is making here is not that the New Covenant is better than the Old Covenant but that the ministry of the Spirit is better than the ministry of the letter. He teaches that the letter without the Spirit is death. This is exactly what Yeshua taught in **John 6:63**: "The Spirit gives life."

The greater glory is found in the fact that the New Covenant is the Old Covenant Laws (Torah) written not in stone but in our hearts by the Spirit! This is one of the main arguments of this paper; that the Torah was not abrogated but renewed by having it written in our hearts by the Spirit. Thus the Torah is the foundation/basis of the New.

OUR TRUE FREEDOM FROM THE TORAH

Approximately two years after writing this paper, Adonai gave me a tremendous revelation concerning Paul's following statements:

- We are not under Torah, but under grace.
- We have become dead to the Torah through the body of Messiah.
- We have been delivered from the Torah.

This teaching can be found in the article entitled ***OUR TRUE FREEDOM FROM THE TORAH*** found at the following URL:

http://restorationoftorah.org/Our_True_Freedom.htm

Since it is such an awesome revelation, I have separated it as a complete treatise. Please read it. It's probably the most important part of this treatise because it deals candidly with Paul's three statements (that seem to have been misunderstood the most) concerning the Torah and the New Covenant believer.

APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS

This section has been added to closely examine the few texts that are usually referenced to prove that the New Covenant believer is no longer under the Torah. Most of the misconceptions concerning Torah and grace arise from poor translations, extra-biblical Church tradition (i.e., traditions and teachings of men) and bad theology. Since the Torah is still to be obeyed in the New Covenant we must seek reconciliation of passages that *seem to* contradict each other. In other words, if the following passages *seem* to contradict the fact that the Torah is still valid, then instead of choosing one or the other as true, we need to see how both can be accommodated by proper interpretation. Hopefully the discussion concerning the apparent contradiction of salvation by works vs. faith has shown how apparent contradictions can be totally harmonized by proper exegesis.

Unfortunately, we have inherited incorrect theology, particularly from a heretic named Marcion. Marcion rejected the Torah completely. He taught (approximately 150-200 AD) that the God of the Old Covenant was a mean, cruel God, whereas the God revealed in the New Covenant was a God of love. He believed Paul's message of grace opposed the Torah to the extent that he deleted the portions of Paul's teachings that disagreed with his views. He later established his own Church, merging his views (which included asceticism, celibacy and violent antagonism towards Judaism) with elements of Gnosticism. Although he was condemned as a heretic, his teachings maintained their influence for centuries. Later, the Roman Catholic monk, Augustine championed Marcion's ideas concerning grace and opposition to Adonai's Old Covenant Laws. At the time of the reformation men such as John Wycliffe (who first translated the New Covenant into English) and Miles Coverdale (who first translated the entire Bible into English) were heavily influenced by Augustine. You must remember that the reformers were former Roman Catholics; therefore, it's not unusual that they maintained some of the Catholic theological tendencies. So, although the reformers did well by explaining that salvation is by faith, they also maintained erroneous views concerning grace and Adonai's Torah.

1) **Colossians 2:13-14:** “When you were dead in your sins and in the un-circumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Messiah. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.”

This is an example of a poor translation. As written, it seems to imply that the “written code, with its regulations,” refers to the Torah. This is what I’ve always thought. The KJV renders the phrase as “the handwriting of ordinances.” The interpretation that this is the Torah is strengthened because the verse states that it “was against us”. However, I offer the following two possibilities:

The phrase “written code” (in the NIV) is translated “handwriting” in the KJV. Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (SEC) shows that the Greek term translated as handwriting is *cheirographon*, which means something handwritten, especially a legal document or *bond*. This legal bond is actually **a certificate of debt!** Isn’t that what the New Covenant teaches, that all have sinned (Rom. 3:23), and that before we come into union with Messiah, we owe a sin debt to Adonai? To further substantiate this as the proper interpretation of the words “written code,” note the following. When a prisoner was crucified it was customary to nail a list of his crimes on the stake. A perfect example of this was the sign placed above Yeshua’s stake, which read, “Yeshua of Nazareth the King of the Jews” (John 19:19-24). Was that not the “crime” that Yeshua was accused of? Clearly, this verse could not literally mean that the Torah, which is holy, good, perfect, and eternal was nailed to Yeshua’s stake. It was our certificate of debt, or our bond, that was nailed to His stake.

The words, “with its regulations,” (in the NIV) are translated as “ordinances” in the KJV. SEC shows that the Greek term translated as ordinances is *dogma*, which means man-made rules, laws, precepts, etc. Paul is not even talking about Adonai’s Laws in this verse. The context of chapter 2 clearly shows that Paul is writing to the Colossians concerning the dangers of the *commandments of men*, not the Torah of Adonai. Note these phrases which *establish the context* of verse 14. In verse 22 Paul says that these are all destined to perish with use. Certainly he’s not talking about Adonai’s Torah, which the Bible declares is ETERNAL.

- **Col. 2:8:** “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and *deceptive philosophy*, which depends *on human tradition* and the basic *principles of this world* rather than on Messiah.”
- **Col 2:18:** “Do not let anyone who delights in *false humility* and the *worship of angels* disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with *idle notion*.”
- **Col 2:20-22:** “Since you died with Messiah to *the basic principles of this world* [once again, how could “basic principles of this world” apply to Adonai’s Torah?], why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to *its rules*: ²¹ ‘Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!’? ²²*These are all destined to perish* [obviously not Adonai’s Torah, since Psalm 119:89 says of Adonai’s Torah, “Your word, O LORD, is eternal, it stands firm in the heavens.”] with use ...”

This word dogmatizo (an obvious derivative of dogma) is used in Colossians 2:20, Luke 2:1, Acts 17:7 and Eph 2:15. In *every instance* it is an ordinance or decree of man, not one of Adonai's laws. In the following verses when Adonai's laws, decrees or ordinances are spoken of, the Greek word *dikaioma* is used; Luke 1:6, and Hebrews 9:1,10.

So what was nailed to the cross? Our certificate of debt to sins *resulting from following the traditions and commandments of men* (which make the Word of Adonai of no effect). Doesn't that line up with the rest of Scripture? Didn't Yeshua teach this? **Mark 7:7-8:** "They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men. ⁸You have let go of the commands of Adonai and are holding on to the traditions of men."

Remember, one who translates must use his own judgment when deciding how to translate a word. Most translators mistranslate the Greek word cheirographon (which literally means certificate of debt or bond) so that readers think the *Torah* was nailed to the cross.

- KJV--Blotting out the handwriting of *ordinances* . . .
- NIV--having canceled the *written code*, with its regulations . . .
- Darby--having effaced the handwriting in *ordinances* . . .

- Not only are the following translations better, they prevent incorrect theology:
- NASB--having canceled out the *certificate of debt* . . .
- RSV--having canceled the *bond* . . .
- CJB--wiped away the *bill of charges* against us . . .

Finally, I offer the following arguments based on spiritual common sense.

- Whatever was nailed to the stake of Yeshua was either evil and needed to be taken away (such as our certificate of debt and our sins); or those things nailed to His stake were Holy and good (such as our Lord, the *holy and sinless* Lamb of Adonai [as the Old Covenant sin offering typified]). *Obviously*, Adonai's holy, good, perfect and eternal Torah isn't evil and therefore couldn't have been nailed to the cross.
 - Re-read Section VII. Now tell me, should something with all of those positive characteristics need to be abolished by nailing to a stake?
 - Why should a document whose entire message was "love your neighbor as yourself" need to be abolished by nailing it to a stake?
- 2) **Colossians 2:16:** "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Messiah."

Note the word *therefore*, which means, "In light of what I've just told you..." Since the debt of sin that results from us giving heed to doctrines of men has been nailed to the cross, don't let those people (the deceivers) judge you in connection with religious festivals, etc., according to their pagan traditions.

Again, remember the context. From verses 4, 8 and 18 we see that the Colossians were being judged by the deceivers regarding those things in verse 16. They were imposing their doctrines of men, or dogma, on the Colossians.

Paul was actually dealing with two separate issues, both of which involved placing the yoke of *commandments of men* on the necks of the Colossians. These were:

- Judaizers and their initiation requirements for Gentiles are addressed in verses 2:11-15. A Gentile proselyte's initiation [to non-Messianic Judaism] involved 1) circumcision in the flesh, 2) immersion into the mikveh [ritual bath], and 3) offering a sacrifice at the temple. Note that in verses 11-15 Paul demonstrates that the Colossian Gentile believers don't need to give in to the Judaizers because 1) in Messiah they have a spiritual circumcision, 2) in Messiah they've been cleansed spiritually by the waters of baptism and 3) Messiah is our sacrifice and we identify with him in death through baptism.
- The Gnostic heresy addressed in verses 1:14-19 and 2:2-10. Gnostics stated that Yeshua never really dwelt on the *earth in human form*. Note how Paul talks about the fullness of Adonai dwelling in Yeshua **BODILY**. Note that Paul is coming against commandments of men, NOT the Torah! The following phrases are taken from the text in Colossians chapter two. You decide whether ANY of these phrases could or should be applied to the HOLY, ETERNAL, TORAH of Adonai!
 - ...deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition...
 - ...the basic principles of this world...
 - ...the basic principles of this world...
 - ...Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!""? These are all destined to perish with use...
 - ...based on human commands and teachings...
 - ...Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom...
 - ...self-imposed worship...
 - ...false humility...
 - ...harsh treatment of the body...
 - ...they lack any value...

Do you see the folly? We've been taught for centuries that Colossians 2:16 should be interpreted as Paul telling believers that the Holy days were over, not necessary, etc. Now do you think that any of the items in 1 –10 above are referring to the Torah? The Torah is the opposite of all those man-made concepts listed by Paul. It's time to arise so that Messiah will give us light!

Thus the context dictates that the Gentile believers not allow themselves to be judged by opinions based on traditions and commandments of men (those of the Judaizers and the Gnostics)! The Gentile believers had every right to participate in religious festivals, Sabbaths, etc., without being judged as a second-rate citizen in Adonai's Kingdom just because they hadn't undergone physical circumcision, immersion in the mikveh or, offered an animal sacrifice.

Furthermore, Paul encourages them not to be judged by those of the Gnostic ilk who worshipped angels, practiced asceticism and followed after celestial mumbo jumbo! In fact, understanding the context PROVES that the Colossian believers were involved in celebrating the feasts of Adonai. That's why Paul is pressing them not to let others judge them (in connection with the feasts) and thus steal their prize of obedience to the festival commands. Note how understanding Jewish tradition and the historical context helped to interpret what Paul was saying.

3) Romans 10:4 “Messiah is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.”

This is an erroneous translation for those speaking English in the 20th century. In fact, there's almost no excuse for the error, as you will see. As stated, the verse implies that once one is found *in Messiah* they are free from obeying the Torah. I offer the following explanation.

- SEC shows that the Greek word translated as *end* is *telos*, which means the point aimed at as a limit, i.e., the goal or purpose. *It does not mean the end as in termination.* Apparently, the word *telos* is used 45 times in the New Covenant and only 4 or 5 times out of 45 *must* it mean end as in finish or termination. In fact the meaning of *telos* is reflected in the English word teleology, which is the branch of philosophy dealing with goals and purposes.
- I've only seen one version that translates this verse properly, the CJB. Here are some examples of where incorrect theology leads.
 - WNT--For Messiah has *put an end to law* as a way to right standing...
 - Phillips--Messiah *means the end of the struggle for righteousness-by-law* for everyone who believes in him...
 - GNB--For Messiah has *brought the Law to an end*, so that everyone who believes is put right with Adonai...
 - NIV, KJV and RSV--For Messiah is *the end of the law*...
 - NASB--For Messiah is *the ^[1]end of the law* [the footnote reads “goal”]...
 - CJB--For *the goal at which the Torah aims* is the Messiah...

Note the erroneous theology of the Phillips and WNT translations, implying that legalistic obedience to the Law made one righteous before Adonai. As was shown earlier, neither the Old nor New Covenants teach that righteousness is attained by legalistic works of the Torah. Although the NASB translated it incorrectly, they at least added the footnote.

Once again, I offer an argument based on spiritual common sense. Since Adonai's Torah is holy, good, perfect and ***eternal***, how could it come to an end?

4) Ephesians 2:14-16: “For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.”

First, let's look at how various translations translate this verse:

- NIV-- "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,"
- NASB-- "For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,"
- RSV-- "For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,"
- KJV-- "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace"
- Darby-- "For *he* is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of enclosure, having annulled the enmity in his flesh, the law of commandments in ordinances, that he might form the two in himself into one new man, making peace"
- YLT-- "For he is our peace, who did make both one, and the middle wall of the enclosure did break down, the enmity in his flesh, the law of the commands in ordinances having done away, that the two he might create in himself into one new man, making peace,"
- WE-- "Messiah has made peace between us. He has brought both Jews and non-Jews together into one people. He has broken down the wall that divided us. In his own body Messiah made an end of the law and its rules. He did this so that in him two peoples could become one. In this way, he made peace between us."

The dividing wall--surrounding the Jewish Temple was a wall on which hung a sign stating, "boundary fence." This wall forbade foreigners from entering by penalty of death. There was also a court for women only. This is the wall Paul spoke of. It's interesting to note the origin of this wall. Was it prescribed in the Torah? No it was not. In fact, Adonai made it clear that the Israelites were not to mistreat foreigners in their midst since they themselves were once aliens in Egypt, **Exodus 23:9**: "Do not oppress an alien; you yourselves know how it feels to be aliens, because you were aliens in Egypt." We've already seen in previous sections that a Gentile who joined himself to Israel was to be considered equal with the Israelites. We even saw that Caleb, one of the two spies who entered the promised land, and received an inheritance was a Gentile proselyte. So where did the wall come from? The commandments of men. The wall shouldn't have been there in the first place. To understand its origin we must understand the Jewish viewpoint at the time.

In **Acts 10:28**: Peter states, “He said to them: You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.” The word translated “law” is a poor translation. Remember, the Greek word that normally translates *Torah* is *nomos*. In the Greek the word found in Acts 10:28 is not *nomos*, therefore it shouldn’t be understood as *Torah* as is implied in the above quote from the NIV. The actual word from the Greek is “athemitos,” which **does not mean** unlawful or against *Torah*. It means taboo, out of the question, not considered right, against standard practice or contrary to cultural norms. Thus, the *Torah* was not the source of the wall or the idea that Jews weren’t to associate with Gentiles. Although the *Torah* doesn’t state that Gentiles themselves are unclean or common, many of their products and practices were regarded as conveying ritual impurity. That’s why it was taboo to associate with Gentiles, not because the *Torah* forbade it.

It is evident when Paul states that Yeshua, “has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,” he is referring to the temple wall that was erected to separate Gentiles from Jews. Furthermore, the origin of the wall was not found in the *Torah*! It was created through extra-biblical Rabbinical traditions and ordinances, i.e., the traditions and commandments of men!

It is plain to see that the dividing wall is something that Yeshua destroyed, and rightfully so. For He has truly made us one in Him. All of the translations above bring this interpretation out.

All of the translations then state in various ways that the *Torah* was “abolished,” or “annulled.” Once again, theology determines interpretation. As you can see from Young’s Literal Translation, it’s not easy to translate that verse. In fact, (excluding YLT) four translations explicitly state that the *law of commandments* was abolished. Although two translations state that the *enmity* was abolished, one equates the *enmity* with the *Torah* while the other states that the *enmity* is the *Torah*. How do these interpretations square with Yeshua’s statement in Matthew 5:17-19 that He didn’t come to destroy the *Torah* or the Prophets? If He didn’t come to destroy them then who are we as mere men to say that they’ve been destroyed? We’ve already seen that the *Torah* is holy, eternal, and perfect. So why should it be annulled?

The fact is, the *Torah* was not annulled. Once again, examination of the Greek shows that the word translated ordinances is “dogma.” As I’ve shown above, usage of the word *dogma* does not refer to Adonai’s commandments. It refers to decrees of men! Could it be that what was abolished was the dogma of the traditions and teachings of men, specifically the one that instituted the dividing wall? Obviously, yes. To be true to the teachings of the entire Bible, both the *Torah* and New Covenant, there’s really only one conclusion. It was the traditions and commandments of men which caused the *enmity*. In other words, it was a perversion of Adonai’s *Torah* that caused *enmity*. Yeshua broke it down by making Jews and Gentiles into the one new man. Why would Paul state that the *Torah* was abolished when he endeavored so diligently to keep it? I’ve seen two other translations which I believe capture the meaning as Paul intended it to be. These translations take into account the weight of the *Torah* and the New Covenant Scriptures that clearly refute any idea that Adonai’s holy, eternal and perfect *Torah* needed to be abolished. Furthermore, they take into account the fact that it was the ordinances of men (*dogma*) that caused *enmity* between Jew and Greek which indeed needed to be destroyed.

- **Ephesians 2:15:** “(When Yeshua was here) in physical form, he made useless [katargeo] the antagonism (between the two) caused by the opinions of men [dogma] concerning the Law of Commandments, so then through him one new man was made from the two.” David Hargis (Messianic Rabbi)
- **Ephesians 2:14-15:** “For he himself is our shalom--he has made us both one and has broken down the m’chitzah [wall] which divided us by destroying in his own body the enmity occasioned by the Torah, with its commands set forth in the form of ordinances...” CJB by David Stern

Other than the dividing wall there are other ways that the Torah caused (or shall we say, occasioned) enmity between Jew and Gentiles.

- Gentile envy of the special status Adonai gave to the Jewish people
- Jewish pride because they were Adonai’s chosen people
- Gentile resentment of Jewish pride

THE NEW COVENANT VIEW OF TORAH

It's been my assertion that the Torah was not abolished. In this section I'd like to present what I've learned about how Torah is to be lived by New Covenant believers. I will only cover a few issues. Hopefully my presentation of these issues will show you that the Torah is applicable to 21st century believers.

The very concept of a New (Renewed) Covenant implies changes, transformation and/or a shifting of priority. There are two words for "new" in the Greek, "kainos" and "neos." "Neos" means something which has never existed before, whereas, "kainos," means freshness and/or renewal of something which **has** existed before.

Vines Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Covenant Words has this to say about kainos: "denotes 'new,' of that which is unaccustomed or unused, *not 'new' in time*, recent, but 'new' as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old. 'The new tongues,' *kainos* of Mark 16:17 are the 'other tongues,' *heteros*, of Acts 2:4. These languages, however, were 'new' and 'different,' not in the sense that they had never been heard before...they were new languages to the speakers..."

Vines Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Covenant Words has this to say about neos: "signifies 'new' in respect of time, that which is recent..."

So we see that the word in the Greek (and the Hebrew also) means renewed and implies new as to form, quality and of a different nature from what is contrasted as old. Our job is to determine *how is the New Covenant "new" in form and quality*. Furthermore, how is it "new" as in *of a different nature from what is contrasted as old*.

The New Covenant speaks of this transformation of the Torah by the New Covenant in Hebrews 7:12.

- **Hebrews 7:12:** "For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law."

You may say, "How does this verse teach that the Torah is transformed in the New Covenant? The Greek word translated "change of the law" is "nomou metathesis." There's that word again, nomou. Literally, the phrase is *transformation of Torah*. Note, this means a transformation of the Torah, not an abrogation or abolishment. It is our responsibility to determine how the New Covenant transforms the Torah.

The New Covenant teaches that with the coming of Yeshua, the Torah was renewed/transformed, not abolished. It was renewed in various ways. The Torah consists of Adonai writing His laws on tablets of stone. The New (Renewed) Covenant consists of Adonai writing His laws in our minds and in our hearts by His Spirit. In fact, Scripture shows that it was His original intent. This is one way that the Torah has been renewed, as in new in form and quality, and of a

different nature from what is contrasted as old. Note the Torah was not abolished. So let's review the facts.

The Torah contained Adonai's Laws written in stone.

- **Exodus 24:12:** "The LORD said to Moses, 'Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction.'"
- **Deuteronomy 10:4-5:** "⁴The LORD wrote on these tablets what he had written before, the Ten Commandments he had proclaimed to you on the mountain, out of the fire, on the day of the assembly. And the LORD gave them to me. ⁵Then I came back down the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made, as the LORD commanded me, and they are there now."
- **II Corinthians 3 7-8:** "Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, ⁸will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?"
- **Hebrews 9:4:** "...which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant."

Pertaining to Adonai's original intent, where did He want His Torah to be located?

- **Exodus 13:9:** "This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead [i.e., in your mind] that the law of the LORD is to be on your lips."
- **Deuteronomy 11:18:** "Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads."
- **Jeremiah 31:33:** "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the LORD. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts."
- **Deuteronomy 6:6-9:** "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

How has the New Covenant "transformed" the Torah with reference to Adonai's original intent?

- **Hebrews 8:8-10:** "But God found fault with the people and said^B: 'The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ⁹It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.

¹⁰This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. *I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.*”

- **II Corinthians 3:1-3:** “Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? ²You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. ³You show that you are a letter from Messiah, the result of our ministry, *written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.*”
- **Romans 7:6:** “But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in *the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.*”

So as we see the New Covenant simply writes Adonai’s Torah on our hearts and minds--this was Adonai’s original intent. This is but one example of how the Torah has been not abolished but transformed by the New (Renewed) Covenant. Note, the Torah states that Adonai’s commandments were to be on our hearts and in our minds. That’s exactly the work of the Spirit in the New Covenant! Therefore, we have fulfilled the essence of the Torah command. It need not be abolished. ***The only difference is how the commandment is being fulfilled.*** In this example we see how the New Covenant emphasizes Adonai’s original intent and a higher spiritual purpose of His command.

The Torah taught that Adonai would dwell with His people and be their God. He also said that His people could only worship where He caused His Name to dwell. In the Torah Adonai dwelt with His people in the Tabernacle/Temple. His original intent was always to dwell with His people in His Tabernacle.

- **Exodus 25:8-9:** “*Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.* ⁹Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.”
- **Exodus 29:44-45:** “So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. *45Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God.*”
- **Deuteronomy 12:11-14:** “*Then to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name--there you are to bring everything I command you: your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, and all the choice possessions you have vowed to the LORD.* ¹²And there rejoice before the LORD your God, you, your sons and daughters, your menservants and maidservants, and the Levites from your towns, who have no allotment or inheritance of their own. ¹³Be careful not to sacrifice your burnt offerings anywhere you please. *14Offer them only at the place the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, and there observe everything I command you.*”

How has the New Covenant “transformed” the Old with reference to Adonai’s original intent?

- **I Corinthians 3:16-17:** *“Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? ¹⁷If anyone destroys God 's temple, God will destroy him; for God 's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.”*
- **I Corinthians 6:19-20:** *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”*
- **II Corinthians 6:16:** *“As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.’”*
- **Ephesians 3:17:** *“...so that Messiah may dwell in your hearts through faith.”*
- **Ephesians 2:21-22:** *“In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”*
- **Revelation 21:3:** *“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.’”*

Once again we see that the New Covenant fulfills the Torah commands. Adonai’s original intent was to literally dwell with His people just like in the garden. We should even expect our current experience of “how he dwells in us” to change. For as we see in the book of Revelation, His tabernacle in heaven comes down to earth! Since we are the temple of Adonai wherever we worship IS where His name dwells. As a matter of fact, Yeshua taught this in **John 4:21-24**, *“²¹Yeshua declared, ‘Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.’”*

John 4:21-24 is an excellent example of why people thought Yeshua was trying to do away with the Mosaic Law. It was unlawful for them to sacrifice anywhere other than at the Temple where He had caused His Name to dwell. Here comes Yeshua saying that in the near future worship will not be in this mountain or in Jerusalem [at the temple]. To an orthodox Jew under the Old Covenant that statement was heresy! That’s why Yeshua had to state explicitly that He didn’t come to destroy the Torah and the Prophets. He came to transform the Old Covenant by bringing out its deeper spiritual meanings and Adonai’s original intent. So, 1) Yeshua knowing that Adonai would dwell IN His people as the Holy Spirit, and 2) knowing that our physical bodies ARE the temple of Adonai under the Renewed Covenant prophesied in John 4:21-24 that true worshippers wouldn’t worship at the Temple in Jerusalem. So when we worship in the New Covenant we still fulfill Adonai’s Torah commands even though we’re not worshipping in Jerusalem. His original intent (the higher spiritual intent) is already contained in the Torah. However, this does not negate the fact that worship in the Temple in Jerusalem will be restored before the millennium.

The Torah taught that forgiveness of sins was only secured by offering a sacrificial substitute for the sinner. This sacrifice could only be offered by a Levitical priest. In the Torah, how did the worshiper 1) secure forgiveness and 2) who was the agent used to secure this forgiveness?

- **Leviticus 5:5:** “When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned ⁶and, as a penalty for the sin he has committed, he must bring to the LORD a female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.”
- **Numbers 15:27-29:** “But if just one person sins unintentionally, he must bring a year-old female goat for a sin offering. ²⁸The priest is to make atonement before the LORD for the one who erred by sinning unintentionally, and when atonement has been made for him, he will be forgiven. ²⁹One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether he is a native-born Israelite or an alien.”
- **Leviticus 17:11:** “For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.”

So we see that the only mechanism for forgiveness of sin was by animal sacrifice. The only person who could offer the sacrifice was the Levitical priest.

What was Adonai’s original intent for forgiveness of sins?

- **Isaiah 1:11-17:** “The multitude of your sacrifices--what are they to me?” says the LORD. ‘I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. ¹²When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? ¹³Stop bringing meaningless offerings!”
- **I Samuel 15:22-23:** “But Samuel replied: ‘Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. ²³For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.”
- **Psalms 51:16-17:** “You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. ¹⁷The sacrifices of Adonai are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O Adonai, you will not despise.”
- **Psalms 40:6-8:** “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. ⁷Then I said, ‘Here I am, I have come--it is written about me in the scroll. ⁸I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”
- **Hebrews 10:5-10:** “Therefore, when Messiah came into the world, he said: ‘Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; ⁶with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.’ ⁷Then I said, ‘Here I am--it is written about me in the scroll--I have come to do your will, O Adonai.’ ⁸First he said, ‘Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire,

nor were you pleased with them (*although the law required them to be made*)'. ⁹Then he said, 'Here I am, I have come to do your will.' He sets aside the first to establish the second. ¹⁰And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Messiah Yeshua once for all."

- **John 1:29:** "The next day John saw Yeshua coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'"
- **Revelation 13:8:** "All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."

These verses show that the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin. Furthermore, Hebrews 10:5-10 says that Psalm 40 is a prophetic announcement by Yeshua that He would be our sacrifice. They also show that the entire Torah was not set aside, but the sacrificial system. Elsewhere in the book of Hebrews we read that the Levitical priesthood has also been set aside. These verses clearly teach that Adonai's plan was for Yeshua to die as our sacrificial lamb.

How has the New Covenant renewed the Old with reference to Adonai's original intent? The Torah commands are still fulfilled when we believe in Yeshua's sacrificial death. The Torah commands have simply been transformed by revealing Adonai's original intent. Yeshua fulfills the requirements of the sin offering of the Torah. Furthermore, He is now our high priest for matters pertaining to forgiveness of sins we continue to commit. However, the Scriptures teach that some types of sacrifices can now be offered by believers (not the sin offering). Thus we fulfill the Torah through the Renewed Covenant.

- **Psalm 51:17:** "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart..."
- **I Peter 2:9:** "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."
- **Hebrews 13:15-16:** "Through Yeshua, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."
- **Romans 12:1:** "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship."

The message is that the New Covenant has transformed the Torah, not abolished it. This is how we are to reconcile the two. Some commands have been transformed by their fulfillment. Other commandments were superseded by the Word of Adonai Himself. This was true in the Tanakh also when Solomon's Temple superseded the portable Tent of Meeting. As we've seen above Yeshua's sacrifice was performed to fulfill the sin offering. Other commands were re-prioritized instead of abolished. The Biblical Holy Days/Festivals (especially Passover) weren't abolished but took on new meanings. If you wonder why we don't stone people any more it's because the penalties for our sins were executed already in Yeshua's death. So as you see, the New Covenant doesn't abolish the Torah, it upholds it! Time does not permit me to write about clean

and unclean foods, keeping the Sabbath, etc. But I will say that it is our responsibility as New Covenant believers to let the Holy Spirit write the Torah on our hearts so that we know what to obey and how to obey it.

MAY YESHUA'S WORDS SETTLE THE MATTER FOREVER

In numerous ways the Bible teaches us Adonai's Torah has not been abrogated/abolished. Previously I believed the Torah had been abolished. The most convincing argument follows. What did Yeshua say about the Torah?

- **Matthew 5:17-19:** *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”* ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

The only question that should be raised is: what did Yeshua mean by fulfill? Some think that since Yeshua fulfilled the Torah it is unnecessary for us to fulfill them. In other words, He fulfilled it for us and it (Torah) is reckoned as fulfilled in us by our faith in Him. It doesn't follow that we don't need to obey the Torah because He “fulfilled it” for us. In fact, Paul makes this point in **Romans 3:31:** “Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.”

The Greek word translated fulfill is “pleroo,” which could be translated “to complete.” Literally it is “to cram, level up or make full.” Figuratively, it is “to furnish, satisfy, execute (an office), or finish (a task). Concerning the figurative meaning Yeshua *finished the task* by *satisfying* the righteous commands of the Torah. He obeyed everything. This meaning is implied when Yeshua told John that He needed to be baptized. Fulfill simply means to obey.

- **Matthew 3:15:** “Yeshua replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this *to fulfill*[OBEY] *all righteousness.*’ Then John consented.”

Concerning the literal meaning, Yeshua came “to make full” the meaning of the Torah! Isn't that what He did on the Sermon on the Mount. He didn't negate any of the commands He taught about. He brought out the higher spiritual meaning of the commands. Furthermore, He revealed Adonai's original intent for each of the commands. Note, He never said, “I've abolished these laws.” Truly, He gave them deeper meaning by filling up, leveling up or cramming them with Adonai's deeper truth. Furthermore, He brought out those deeper meanings so that we could live them more fully, thus, fulfilling His will in our lives. Read this quote from Anglican Christian Brigid Younghughes:

“...‘I came not to destroy, but to fulfill.’ And surely ‘to fulfill’ means to complete, in the sense of bringing to perfection, not, as Christians have all too often interpreted it, to render obsolete; to fulfill in such a way as to perfect a foundation on which to build further (*Christianity's Jewish Heritage*, West Sussex: Angel Press, 1988, p.8).”

If you are still not convinced that Yeshua intended for us to keep the Torah I offer this last example. One of the central commands of the Torah was the Sabbath. To show that Yeshua intended His disciples to continue to observe the Sabbath, I offer the following verses:

- **Matthew 24:14-21:** “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. ¹⁵So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--¹⁶then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. ¹⁸Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. ¹⁹How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! ²⁰Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again.”

This passage shows beyond a shadow of doubt that Yeshua expected His disciples to be observing the Sabbath even in the time frame just preceding His second coming! If the Sabbath was done away with (along with the other Torah commandments) then why this admonition? Please, in light of everything the Scriptures state concerning the Torah, take the obvious meaning. The Torah with the Sabbath command was not abolished by Yeshua. After all, He said in Matthew 5:17-19 that He did not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets!

Let’s look at Matthew 7:21-23: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ ²³Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”

The Greek word translated “evildoers” is “anomia.” In a non-Jewish context, anomia means, absence of law. But as I’ve stated before, *nomos* is the Greek word the Jewish people chose to translate the Hebrew word Torah. Therefore, the translation should read “... Away from me, you who act as if there’s no Torah.” Once again we see the translators have done a disservice to the translation. The proper translation puts an entirely different meaning on this verse. Note the following verses that should be translated Torah. Each one of these verses used the Greek word *nomos*, the context clearly shows that it’s the Torah that is being referenced, not some “New Covenant Torah” that is separate from the Old. Don’t they have a different flavor now?

- **James 2:8-13:** “If you really keep the royal *Torah* found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing right. ⁹But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the *Torah* as lawbreakers. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole *Torah* and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. ¹¹For he who said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not murder.’ If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a *Torah* breaker. ¹²Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the *Torah* that gives freedom, ¹³because judgment

without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!”

- **I Corinthians 15:56:** “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the *Torah*.”

Whether modern translators willfully mistranslate by removing the Jewish flavor or whether they do it simply because of tradition, I don't know. It is a well-documented fact however, that soon after the apostles died there was a pre-meditated attempt to expunge Hebraic influence from the Scriptures. This paper has attempted to show you the “fruit” of that effort and to correct it.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

So how are we to properly relate to the Torah? What about kosher laws, dress, etc.? It is my current belief that each believer must allow the Holy Spirit to teach and guide them. We must all honestly seek to understand the entire revelation that Adonai has given us. The Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 demonstrated that Gentiles do not need to become Jews (circumcision, mikveh and animal sacrifice) in order to obtain salvation; however, they were still expected to grow in knowledge of the Torah. I will not be dogmatic on those issues. One of my goals in writing this paper was to simply dispel the notion that the Torah was abolished or that we are “free” from it. This paper is the result of approximately six months of intensive study. I’m already aware that I don’t have answers to every question that can be raised. Furthermore, I’m sure that I will continue to grow in knowledge and understanding. Therefore, I will be dogmatic only in stating that *Torah was not abolished!* It is our responsibility as believers to determine how Adonai wants us to apply it (as it is expressed in the New Covenant) in our lives. It is my prayer that anyone who reads this document does so with an open mind. We are in a time of restoration of all things spoken of by Adonai’s prophets. Will you reject a truth Adonai is trying to restore because it doesn’t line up with your experience? I believe the Bible is clear. I also believe that we’ve experienced so many hundreds of years of *traditions of men* that it is difficult to see the truth. That is unfortunate. I have stood on both sides of this issue and I am persuaded that Adonai has led me in my choices. I used to reject this teaching because I was never presented this truth in a comprehensive way. I always had a few “proof texts” here and there to rifle down arguments. But now that I’ve viewed the witness of the entire Bible, I’ve come up with one conclusion. The Torah was not abolished.

I’m not negating anything that Adonai has done in my past or yours! I’m not saying that our walk as Gentile Christians was of the devil. That would be ludicrous. Adonai has truly done great things for us, mainly because of His infinite mercy. Please, don’t hear what I’m not saying. I’m saying that Adonai is calling us to respond to His Restoration of His truth in order that we may more fully obey Him. May He lead you also.

Some more thoughts:

- Even as Israel tried to pursue a law of righteousness apart from faith, so we Gentiles have pursued faith apart from obedience to the *Torah*. Both are wrong. The truth, as usual, lies somewhere in the middle.
- Yeshua’s teaching at the Sermon on the Mount was not a new doctrine. It simply brought to light the true, deeper, spiritual meaning of the Torah commands that He said are still valid.
- The entire Torah teaches, as Yeshua did, that we are to love Adonai by **keeping His commandments**.
- The Torah came through Moses, but grace and truth came through Yeshua Messiah.
- Think of “Not under Law” as not under legalistic observance of the Torah with its Mosaic commands written in stone.

- Think of “under grace” as under the renewed covenant with the Mosaic commands written on our hearts by the Spirit who also provides us the strength (grace) we need to overcome the law of sin and death.
- The New Covenant still has the Torah commands as its basis. The difference is that now we have the Spirit to write those commands on our hearts and empower us to obey.
- The festival commandments are important because in them we rehearse Adonai’s plan of redemption. Since Adonai’s plan of redemption is not complete there is still much to learn from the feasts.
- It was always Adonai’s intent for us to have His Torah written on our hearts, thus providing empowerment and motivation from within.
- Men have always been saved by grace through faith. However, the error of the New Covenant Judaizers was in forcing the Gentiles to follow the letter of the Torah to **EARN salvation and justification** apart from the work of FAITH.
- Note, when asked how to obtain eternal life, Yeshua didn’t say “Believe in me,” he said obey the commandments [by implication, the Law of Moses].
- It was always Adonai’s intent that Gentile believers remain ONE with their Jewish brothers. The adversary has caused the division. The Spirit wants to bring unity.

Endnotes

¹ David H. Stern, Jewish New Testament Commentary, (Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc., 1992), p. 688.

² Stern, p. 334 and 552.

³ Stern, p. 536-537.