



Faith practice for the non-Jew
Part 4 –The Epistles

by

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MEN OF TORAH

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Introduction

Those of us who have grown up in the Bible-belt or were raised in believing homes have been introduced to an anomaly in our lifetime. The faith of our fathers is being questioned from nearly every angle because of the Torah movement. This changing perspective is affecting both Protestant and Catholics. Families are being disrupted, fellowships are being fractured and questions that are never asked – are being asked – to Pastors and Sunday School teachers around the globe.

Today Israel is experiencing the eroding of its alliance with the United States under its second term liberal President and the threat of Iran's nuclear capabilities are raising questions regarding Israel's continued existence. Yet Jews are cautiously finding friendships with non-Jews throughout the world. Orthodox rabbis are heralding this resurgence of Torah-obedience in non-Jews as a harbinger of Messiah's coming.

If we accept that *Yeshua ben Yosef* (Jesus son of Joseph) is the promised Jewish *Mashiach* (Messiah) then several questions must be answered for the non-Jew who has put his faith in this Messiah, as I have.

1. Jews are clearly commanded and exhorted throughout the *Tanakh* (Hebrew Bible) to keep the commandments of G-d. *But what about me?*
2. Jews are taught they are bound by the *halachah* (laws of faith practice) laid down by the Sages of Israel, and codified in the *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law). *But what about me?*
3. Christians have taught that Jesus abolished the law of Moses and those of attempt to keep the law trample the blood of Messiah. *But what about me?*
4. Karite Jews have found common ground with "Messianic" (Christians observing or acknowledging some or all of the Torah as applicable or binding) teachers wary of the teachings handed down by the Church, agreeing that Rabbinic Judaism is burdensome and silly, so Jews and Messianics together should reject the *halachah*. *But what about me?*
5. Similar to the varying perspectives found in Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Judaism, Messianics have varying views on kosher eating, Sabbath observance and other *halachah*. *But what about me?*
6. Well-known Messianic groups have defined certain Torah commands as "sign commands" which are only to be kept by Jews. *But what about me?*
7. Orthodox Judaism teaches that non-Jews should formally convert to Judaism or keep the Noachide laws described in the Talmud. *But what about me?*

In this study we will probably not answer all these questions definitively, but each man should be able to come to a Biblically-sound conclusion on which to base his life's walk and the raising of his children. We will review the political climate leading up to the days of *Yeshua*; examine what He said and did; study the Acts of the Apostles and their Epistles; review Church history to

conclude how *Yeshua's* immediate followers understood their role within Judaism and taught others. Finally, we will study the eventual schism that brought Christianity and Judaism to the place they are today, and see if there are conclusions which can be drawn.

Our texts for this study include the *Tanakh*; the Apostolic Writings; the Babylonian Talmud; the works of Josephus; texts of the Pre-Ecumenical Councils and the Catholic Encyclopedia.

In most cases we will be using the English Standard Version of the Bible, but I will be referring to The Delitzsch Hebrew Gospels as well. Every effort will be made to provide the reading texts for you.

Manly Time of Study

We study in a men-only group so that men can bring their sons and learn together. Our desire is to be an adjunct and assistance to men teaching their wives, sons and daughters. This is not meant to be derogatory or chauvinistic. We practice a patriarchal faith. Men need to be held to a high standard or they flounder. Men need accountability or they stray. Our ministry focus is on men, because strong men make strong families and strong families make a strong nation.

Much has been given us, and much will rightfully be expected from us. We have duties to others and duties to ourselves; and we can shirk neither. We have become a great nation, forced by the fact of its greatness into relations with the other nations of the earth, and we must behave as beseems a people with such responsibilities. Toward all other nations, large and small, our attitude must be one of cordial and sincere friendship. We must show not only in our words, but in our deeds, that we are earnestly desirous of securing their good will by acting toward them in a spirit of just and generous recognition of all their rights. But justice and generosity in a nation, as in an individual, count most when shown not by the weak but by the strong. While ever careful to refrain from wrongdoing others, we must be no less insistent that we are not wronged ourselves. We wish peace, but we wish the peace of justice, the peace of righteousness. We wish it because we think it is right and not because we are afraid. No weak nation that acts manfully and justly should ever have cause to fear us, and no strong power should ever be able to single us out as a subject for insolent aggression.

Theodore Roosevelt, Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933

How important these words have become, in the United States of America, in these last days. May we live up to the high calling of Messiah *Yeshua*.

Class Time

Our class time will allow for discussion and review of the reading material. Our primary source will be the Apostolic Writings. We shall not refer to these Scriptures as the “New Testament” because this invites the false belief that the Hebrew Scriptures are in some way passé or old. This is not the case. We shall not refer to these Scriptures as the “New Covenant” (*Brit Chadasha*) implying that they contain, describe or define the New Covenant, as referenced by the prophet Jeremiah.

Our expectation is that you will attend if at all possible. You will enrich the time of others by being punctual and prepared, having read the homework assignment before class begins. If you cannot attend, please let me know ahead of time and review the audio at your earliest convenience.

I understand what it is to be a man under authority, and a man with too many responsibilities. If you will invest in your spiritual growth for the next four months, I promise to provide the venue for which that growth can be nurtured and developed, so that you can be a better husband, father and employee/owner.

This is Part 2 – The Epistles. I strongly urge you to review Part 1 – The Gospels before continuing in this guide.

*Open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of your Torah.
Psalm 119:18*

Lesson Forty-Three

In this last portion of our study, let's begin with a quick overview of what we have seen so far.

Throughout the book of Acts and the few epistles we have already studied, Paul admonishes *obedience*, often without a reference to the source. To what are the new believers to be obedient? Throughout our classes, it has been obvious that the Torah is the standard for obedience, for both Jews and Gentiles. Further, the Jewish traditions were passed down to the Gentile communities, and they were expected to embrace these, as well.

If you're jumping in with our study at this point, and you have a Gentile Christian background, that may be surprising. If so, I encourage you to back up and start with the Gospels. Paul has appealed to Caesar and has been sent to Rome. For several years he is kept in prison, meeting with assembly leaders and writing to congregations throughout Greece, Macedonia and Asia.

Read the letter to the Colossians quickly, then read Colossians 1. This is a jam-packed chapter of Scripture which reveals much of Paul's understanding of G-d's work on our behalf and the true essence of the *Mashiach*.

Verse 1:12 teaches us that it was *HaShem* Who *qualified* us to share in the inheritance in the *olam haba*, the world to come. This is a rare word in the Apostolic Scriptures, appearing here and in 2 Corinthians.

*"Who has made us **sufficient** to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."*

(2 Corinthians 3:6 ESV, emphasis mine)

Paul includes himself in these statements of qualification and sufficiency, demonstrating clearly that being born Jewish is insufficient to secure a place in the world to come.

There are some who deny that *Yeshua* is divine. There are some nuances, to be sure, but based on this chapter, exactly Who is He? Be specific.

Paul says that *before* Messiah we were "doing evil deeds." How are we to act *after* Messiah? Verse 1:22 uses the words holy, blameless and above reproach. I believe these represent three aspects of our walk with *HaShem*. First, that we are different from the world. Second, that we live by rules governing our conduct. And finally, that our behavior has established a reputation which is uncompromising. What is that objective standard known and taught by Paul to the recipients of his letter?

The first chapter closes with “the mystery.” Oooohhhh... A big secret! Let’s look at a few phrases that Paul uses to the Colossians and others.

*“the mystery **hidden for ages and generations**
but now revealed to his saints.”*

(Colossians 1:26 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Messiah Yeshua, according to the revelation of the mystery that was **kept secret for long ages**”*

(Romans 16:25 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of G-d,
which **G-d decreed before the ages** for our glory.”*

(1 Corinthians 2:7 ESV, emphasis mine)

To be clear, Paul mentions the mystery no less than five times in his letter to the Ephesians, which we will address in upcoming lessons. This secret has been guarded, presumably, since the foundation of the world. What is the mystery? What is it that was so radical to the Jewish community that they killed an innocent man? What was so different from what men were taught?

Review

1. Jeremiah 18:11 teaches the men of Judah to turn from their evil way and deeds. To what should they turn?
2. The prophet Zechariah implores the people of Israel not to be like their fathers, but to return from their evil ways and evil deeds (1:4). To what should they return?
3. Paul asked and urged the Thessalonians to walk as they ought to walk and to please G-d. How were they to know the way to walk and to please G-d?

Lesson Forty-Four

Let's read **Colossians 2**. Laodicea is one of the seven communities to which John writes from Patmos. The ring of seven has Colossae just to the southwest. Paul asks that this letter be read to the Laodiceans, and that their letter be read by the Colossians. Too bad we don't have that one.

Paul implies that Messiah *Yeshua* is G-d's mystery. All men, regardless of race or ethnicity, would be qualified for a place in the world to come, based on His sacrifice – and our faith in that reality. Remember as you read that Paul has never visited the assembly at Colossae.

Circumcision is required to be a part of the covenant. If you were born a Gentile, then you may not have been circumcised on the eighth day, as is commanded. This means you are not part of the covenant *HaShem* made with His people. But as Gentiles, there is a way to be made a part of the covenant! Believe in Messiah *Yeshua's* sacrifice and you shall be saved. This is a circumcision without hands. (As an aside, if you are obedient to the Torah, then it won't be long before you get circumcised physically, in order to eat the Passover lamb, but this has nothing to do with a place in the world to come.)

In verse 2:16, Paul encourages us to avoid those passing judgement or insisting on asceticism and angel worship. Many in the current iteration of the "church" would read this paragraph and interpret it exactly opposite of how you may be doing. Explain how this is possible.

If we are to keep the Torah, how do you reconcile commands/exhortations such as, "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch?"

These mentioned above are all according to human precepts and teachings. To what might Paul be referring? Is he suggesting that we should abandon everything taught by the Sages of Israel?

Review

1. In verse 2:6, Paul admonishes the believers saying, "as you have received Messiah *Yeshua*, so walk in Him." What does this mean, practically?
2. In the same verse, Paul says they were established in the faith through teaching. What did he teach?

Lessen Forty-Five

Read chapter 3 of Colossians. I think the chapter break would have been better placed in 2:20. Reread that paragraph.

Here's a short outline, demonstrating the flow.

- If you have *died* with Messiah
- If you have been *raised* with Messiah
- Put to death what is *earthly*
- Put on, *above* all, love
- Submit, love, obey, don't provoke, work heartily

Paul's argument in this corrective section to the Colossians is simple. If you are in Messiah, then you have been changed on the inside. Messiah dwells in you. You live in and through Him. So, make the outside match the inside.

The list which Paul provides in 3:5 – 7 is self-explanatory except for *passion*. The Greek is πάθος (*pathos*) meaning an affliction of the mind; suffering of the mind, etc. From *pathos* which we get words like *pathological*. This is not "good" passion.

Again, Paul lumps all men together. The guidance for life is the same, whether Jew or Gentile. He directs his comments to all those who are elect (chosen), set apart (holy) and loved by G-d.

Comment on these truths.

In verse 16 Paul talks about the "word of Messiah" dwelling in you richly. Is that the word of G-d? Is it the Torah? Is it the words of *Yeshua*?

Verse 18 starts a series of commands to various groups. Wives, husbands, children, fathers, and bondservants. Chapter 4 verse 1 finishes the thought (with the chapter break in the wrong place again) with masters. I think this section is better analyzed from the "how" rather than the "who." How are these groups to respond?

- Fitting in the L-rd
- Pleasing to the L-rd
- Fearing the L-rd
- Work for the L-rd
- Serving the L-rd

How were the Colossians supposed to know what is fitting, pleasing and serving *to* the L-rd, let alone how to fear or work *for* the L-rd? Explain your answer.

Review

1. Describe the change Paul expects has happened to the believers in Messiah *Yeshua* living in Colossae.
2. Describe the lifestyle of the believers in Colossae, according to Paul's vision.

Lesson Forty-Six

Finally, the last chapter of Paul's letter to the assembly in Colossae. It's short and to the point.

Read Colossians 4. How would you describe "outsiders?"

We may think of Paul sitting in a cold jail cell all alone, but in reality, he was surrounded by friends and fellow workers for the kingdom of Messiah. I notice Onesimus and Archippas as mentioned. Can you name them all? Which ones are Jews?

Read Philemon. Describe this short letter, in your own words.

Do you think this letter was written about the same time as Paul's letter to the Colossians, or quite a bit earlier or later? Justify your response.

Read Ephesians 1. Note every place that Paul mentions that we are "in Him."

Review

1. Why did Paul write to the Colossian assembly?
2. Why did Paul write to Philemon?
3. Summarize the first chapter of Paul's letter to the assembly at Ephesus.

Lesson Forty-Seven

Read Ephesians 2. Notice the Temple language of Gentiles being “far off” and now being “brought near.” Verse 10 is our focus. We are His workmanship. We were created for “good works.” These “works” were prepared beforehand, by G-d, *that we should walk in them*. Read the following verses, where Paul or Luke, uses the same word.

*“Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was **full of good works and acts of charity.**”*

(Acts 9:36 ESV)

*“But declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to G-d, **performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.**”*

(Acts 26:20 ESV)

*“They show that **the work of the Torah is written on their hearts**, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.”*

(Romans 2:15 ESV)

*“Walk in a manner worthy of the L-rd, fully pleasing to him, **bearing fruit in every good work** and increasing in the knowledge of G-d.”*

(Colossians 1:10 ESV)

*“Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all Torah-lessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession **who are zealous for good works.**”*

(Titus 2:14 ESV)

Good works and acts of charity are a common theme in Jewish teachings. These are *mitzvot* and *tzedakah*. How would you describe these works?

Read Ephesians 3 – 4. Chapter 4 opens with an admonition from Paul to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling. He describes attributes of how that walk should look, but does not enumerate the actual walk itself. Why do you think that is?

Paul makes it clear in verse 17 and following that we Gentiles should *no longer walk as the Gentiles do*, but rather, put on the new self, created after the likeness of G-d in true righteousness and holiness. Describe how you, a Gentile, could possibly know how to walk in “true righteousness and holiness.”

Read Ephesians 5 – 6. Paul opens the chapter by commanding us to be imitators of G-d, just like children are of their earthly fathers. What do you think he means?

Paul’s encouragement is consistent. We are to

- Walk as children of light (doing what is good, right and true)
- Try to discern what is pleasing to the L-rd
- Look carefully how we walk (wise, not unwise)
- Understand what the will of the L-rd is
- Bring up our children in the discipline and instruction of the L-rd

Does it feel like there is a list of godly ways or an instruction manual to which Paul is consistently referring? Doesn’t it sound like he left them with a manual or book of some type? Write your thoughts below.

Do you notice a common thread and even consistent words between the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians? Perhaps Paul and his companions had a “writing day” on which he penned these and the letter to Philemon?

Review

1. While writing to a predominantly Gentile assembly in Ephesus, Paul opens chapter 6 with a direct reference to the first commandment with a promise. Then gives fathers their rule for raising children. Do you think this is an open reference to the Torah? Explain your answer.
2. Paul mentions the “whole armor of G-d” twice in 6:10-20. The only other use of this Greek word is in Luke 11:14-23. Do you think Paul had this in mind?

Lesson Forty-Eight

We are swiftly moving to the end of the Apostolic Scriptures! Paul, imprisoned in Rome, is writing to all of the communities he had visited or influenced. Next is his letter to the assembly in Philippi. You will recall that Paul went over to Macedonia, to preach to Philippi and Thessalonica. **Read Philippians 1.** How do you suppose Paul expected the Philippians to “approve what is excellent, and be pure and blameless for the day of Messiah?” Be specific, as the term “blameless” has much to do with our topic.

Was anyone actually “blameless” according to the Torah? Is that even possible??

I’ve heard that Paul was chained to a different guard each day. When he wasn’t writing, Paul would share the good news of Messiah *Yeshua* with each guard. Based on Paul’s comments, what do you think of this account?

Paul is convinced that his remaining in the flesh, in chains, is a good thing for the believer’s “progress” in the faith. This implies a learning track or set course for each one. Explain what Paul means.

Read Philippians 2. This is the great “kinosis” passage. Messiah “emptied” Himself (kinosis) to take on the form of a servant. The great disguise. Yet Paul is convinced that there was a “mindset” that *Yeshua* had regarding this “reduction” as Calvin Miller puts it in his excellent Trilogy, which includes [A Requiem for Love](#), [A Symphony in Sand](#) and [An Overture of Light](#). These are excellent works which I highly recommend. Do you have this mindset? Paul believes that this same mindset is the essence of self-less love. Write your thoughts.

Paul claims the Philippians have always “obeyed.” This implies rules – known rules – to which the believers were adhering. They are not listed. Would they have understood to what he was referring?? In the same thought he references blamelessness again...

Read Philippians 3 – 4. Paul gives his pedigree – and includes the fact that he too, is blameless. What do you think he means by that?

Paul used the word “mature” in the ESV, which is the Greek τέλειος (*teleios*), meaning an end or goal. I suspect that you don’t recognize this word in this context. Here are some references that use the same Greek word. Look them up in context. I’ve highlighted the Greek word for you.

*“You therefore must be **perfect**, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

(Matthew 5:48 ESV)

*“Jesus said to him, “If you would be **perfect**, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.””*

(Matthew 19:21 ESV)

*“And let steadfastness have its **full** effect, that you may be **perfect** and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

(James 1:4 ESV)

*“There is no fear in love, but **perfect** love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.”*

(1 John 4:18 ESV)

Write your thoughts.

Paul is pretty bold in v3:17, encouraging his recipients to imitate him, as his walk is an example. If you are a father, I believe Paul would think the same applies to you. How do you feel about being under a microscope like that? What is your guide??

Review

1. I believe that Paul is enumerating what can be gleaned from the Torah in v4:8-9. What are your thoughts?
2. What does Paul highlight as evidence of the Philippians faith?

Lesson Forty-Nine

Our first mention of Timothy was years ago, shortly after the Jerusalem council's decision to send Paul, Barnabas, Silas and Judas deliver a letter from the council to the believers in Antioch. (If you need a refresher, start in Acts 15.)

Luke describes a second missionary journey that Paul takes with Silas, revisiting the assemblies in Asia. As they travel west across the continent from Antioch, about half way to Laodicea and the other six congregations mentioned in John's Revelation, they stopped in Lystra. Where Paul met a disciple named Timothy and his mother. They were both believers in Messiah *Yeshua*. He started traveling with Paul and Silas. It wasn't long before the riots in Thessalonica, and the night time trip to Berea. The agitators followed them and Paul was whisked away by boat to Athens, but Silas stayed behind in Berea with Timothy. What a great introduction to ministry!

The next time we hear of Timothy is when Paul is on his third missionary journey, again, visiting the congregations established earlier. Since things had gotten bad in Thessalonica that last time he had visited, he sent Timothy and Erastus there ahead of him, while he preached in Ephesus. That trip ended with Paul's desire to return to Jerusalem. Several disciples from various places in his travels accompanied him.

"Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus."

(Acts 20:4 ESV)

Paul is mentioned in 11 of Paul's letters. Once they met, they were rarely apart, until Paul sent Timothy to lead the congregation in Ephesus. **Read 1 Timothy 1.** Why does Paul call Timothy his "true" child in the faith?

Paul mentions a group of teachers in Ephesus that were off track in their view or interpretation of the Scriptures. Make a list of their actions with which Paul had a problem.

These men desired to be "teachers of the law." This is not a phrase, as it appears in English, but rather a specific title. It only appears two other times in the Apostolic Scriptures. The Greek word is νομοδιδάσκαλος (*nomodidaskalos*) which is a compound from νομος (*nomos*) "law" and διδάσκαλος (*didaskō*) "teacher," from διδάσκω (*didaskō*.)

*“On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and **teachers of the law** were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.”*

(Luke 5:17 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a **teacher of the law** held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while.”*

(Acts 5:34 ESV, emphasis mine)

Frankly, I’m surprised these men want to be “teachers of the law” and not *lawyers*. The difference is subtle. The Greek translated in our Bibles as “lawyers” is νομικός (*nomikos*.) You can see the νόμος (*nomos*) for law in the word. The lawyer is “learned in the law” while the desire of these men is to “teach the law.” What are your thoughts?

Let’s compare verses 3 – 4 with a similar verse from Paul’s letter to Titus. These are the only two references to “genealogies” in the Scripture, and Paul references “myths” and “quarrels” to both Timothy and Titus.

“... charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.”

(1 Timothy 1:3-4 ESV)

“But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.”

(Titus 3:9 ESV)

What do you suppose these men were quarreling about? Do you see clues to these “different doctrines?” Whose genealogy would they be endlessly going on about? Expand upon these thoughts. (For those of you dying to dig into the Greek, examine the word “law” in the Titus verse.)

We will close our examination of 1 Timothy 1 with Paul’s view of the Torah. **Read 1 Timothy 1:8 – 11.** Paul says the Torah is *not* for the righteous, but for the ανυποτάκτος (*anupotaktos*) – those who are not or cannot be *subjected* to the Torah. Paul uses the same description with Titus.

“For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.”

(Titus 1:10 ESV)

How would you describe those who are not subject to the Torah? Gentiles? Non-believers? Explain your answer fully.

The Greek word translated as “laid down” or “made” should focus our attention. It’s the word *κειμαι* (*keimai*.) It connotes that something is “set (by G-d),” “destined,” or “appointed” in its metaphorical sense. Here are some examples.

*“And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is **appointed** for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed”*

(Luke 2:34 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil **lies** over their hearts.”*

(2 Corinthians 3:15 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am **put** here for the defense of the gospel.”*

(Philippians 1:16 ESV, emphasis mine)

Now rewrite this opening phrase of 1 Timothy 1:9 in your own words.

*“...the law is not **laid down** for the just but for the lawless and disobedient...”*

(1 Timothy 1:9a ESV, emphasis mine)

Review

1. How would you describe the problem with which Timothy had to wrestle?
2. Describe the difference between the Biblical terms “teacher of the Law” and “lawyer.”
3. Is a Pharisee the same thing as a “teacher of the law?”

Lesson Fifty

Before we continue in 1 Timothy, I want us to look at the next chronological letter – Titus. It is very similar to 1 Timothy, as you’ve already seen in last week’s lesson. The same thoughts and concerns were fresh in Paul’s mind, repeating what appears to be another letter writing session.

Titus met Paul during his multi-year stay in Antioch with Barnabas, culminating in the Jerusalem council’s clarification regarding the salvation of Gentiles. Note the trip to the Acts 15 council is noted in Paul’s letter to the assembly in Galatia.

*“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem
with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me...
But even Titus, who was with me,
was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek.”*

(Galatians 2:1, 3 ESV)

Paul chose to circumcise Timothy, as everyone knew his Gentile father. Not so with Titus. I suspect he was Paul’s defense exhibit #1 regarding Gentile conversion and the unnecessary ritual. Paul had sent Titus to Corinth to clean up the glaring problems of which we read in 1 Corinthians, and to pick up their financial assistance to the Judean believers, as described in 2 Corinthians. Paul had left Titus on the island of Crete, which sits in the Mediterranean Sea, south and between Athens and Ephesus.

Read Titus 1:1 – 4. Why do you suppose Paul calls Titus his “true child?” Be sure you don’t contradict your answer from last week’s lesson about Timothy. 😊

We shall see that these two young men were to understand each person’s place in the body of Messiah. From kings to women, elders to deacons, prayer warriors and the insubordinate (which we learned about last week.)

1 Timothy opens with four paragraphs with specific focus. Titus opens in a similar way with three such paragraphs, with the last being a compilation. **Read 1 Timothy 2:1 – 3:13** then **read Titus 1:5 – 2:10.**

Now go back and read the same two passages one more time. Let your mind dwell on common phrases between the two. Picture *one man* writing nearly the same thing to these two men. Write your first impressions.

Complete the chart below with the positive attributes and character traits of each from both letters.

Position or Person	1 Timothy	Titus
Overseer ἐπισκοπή (episkopē)	Above reproach Husband of one wife	Above reproach Husband of one wife
Elder πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros)	Sober-minded Self-controlled Respectable Hospitable Able to teach Gentle Household manager Submissive children Mature in the faith Good reputation outside	Believing children Submissive children Hospitable Lover of good Self-controlled Upright Holy Disciplined Defending sound doctrine Able to teach
Deacons διάκονος (diakonos)		
Deacons wives		
Older Men		
Older Women		
Younger Men		
Younger Women		
Bondservants		

Now write the attributes of the *false teachers* below.

Let's see if there is a correlation between the first two paragraphs in 1 Timothy.

What to do?

Pray for all people	Lift holy hands
---------------------	-----------------

Who?

Kings	Women
-------	-------

How?

Peaceful, quiet, godly and dignified life	Respectable, proper, godliness, good works
---	--

Specifically...

Good and pleasing	Learn and submit
-------------------	------------------

Attributes...

Salvation and truth	Teaching and authority
---------------------	------------------------

Remember...

One G-d and One Mediator	Adam and Eve
--------------------------	--------------

The gifts..

Ransom and testimony	Deception and transgressor
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The result.

Preacher, Apostle to Gentiles	Salvation
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Do you think this is a coincidence? Write your thoughts below.

Is *supplication, prayer, intercession and thanksgiving* promoted, encouraged or commanded in the Torah? [Read Gen 20:17, 25:21, Exo 8:30, 1Sa 2:1, 12:23, 1Ki 8:28-30, 1Ch 16:7, Job 42:8, Psalms 32:6, 50:23 and Isa 53:12.](#) Write your conclusions.

Is *lifting hands* a Biblical mandate or practice, or something the Christian church has devised? [Read Gen 14:22, Lev 9:22, Neh 8:6, Psalms 28:2, 63:4, 119:48, 141:12 and Lam 3:41.](#) Write your conclusions.

Review

We will finish 1 Timothy and Titus in our next lesson, as we look to Paul's view of the future.

1. Did Paul introduce new habits, traditions or customs to the assembly at Ephesus by Timothy?
2. Is there a big difference between an Elder and a Deacon?

Lesson Fifty-One

One of my favorite passages is the summary of *Yeshua's* mission in 1 Timothy. **Read 1 Timothy 3:14 – 16.** And the parallel passage, **read Titus 2:11 – 3:15.** For what is Paul waiting? Are you?

Read 1 Timothy 4. The Greek for deceitful in v.1 is πλάνος (planos), which generally means “error.” It actually means “wandering, roving” and was used by Cicero and others regarding vagabonds and tramps. In the context of doctrine and truth, *planos* implies the same type of double-mindedness and wandering mind to which James alluded.

Is Paul throwing the Torah's kosher laws under the bus?? Defend your answer.

The term “good doctrine” used in the ESV is better translated as “good teaching.” In the same passage, the term “trained in the words” is better translated as “nourished in the words.” Does this parallel with James 3?

Our community works to have a minyan each gathering so we can read the Scripture publicly. In this, I believe, is great value. In English, we *read* (this is a verb, an action) and *what* we read may be called “the reading.” We use this term frequently, as in, “The reading for this week is...”

In Greek, these are two different words. They are, of course, related. But they are different words. Here is an example. First, with the Ethiopian eunuch, we have the verb.

*“So Philip ran to him and heard him **reading** Isaiah the prophet and asked,
“Do you understand what you are reading?””*

(Acts 8:30 ESV, emphasis mine)

Second, in the synagogue, we have the noun.

*“After the **reading** from the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue
sent a message to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have any word of
encouragement for the people, say it.””*

(Acts 13:15 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“Until I come, devote yourself to **the public reading** of Scripture,
to exhortation, to teaching.”*

(1 Timothy 4:13 ESV, emphasis mine)

One would think that Paul is encouraging the reading of the Scriptures – publicly. But that would only be the case if v4:13 used the *verb*. It does not. It is the *noun*. And the word “public” is *not* in the text!

Paul is specifically pointing to the weekly Scripture portion, just as in Acts 13:15. The word is ἀναγνοσις (*anagnōsis*). To “know again,” or “to own.” With this in mind, we can see that Paul is pointing back to the Torah and the need for constant review, that we may “own” the text, becoming “people of the Book.” Write your thoughts.

Review

We did a lot of Greek in these past two lessons. It is important to rightly divide the word, and this often requires us to look at the original text. It is easier with the tools we have today.

1. There are over 20 references to teaching in the letters to Timothy and Titus. They are all the same Greek, save one. Titus 2:1 uses a completely different word which focuses not on the teaching, but on the *sound* of teaching. See if you can find the word. Write your findings below.
2. In 1 Timothy 4:15, Paul commands Timothy to “practice these things, immerse yourself in them.” What is he talking about?

Lesson Fifty-Two

Read 1 Timothy 5:1 – 6:2. There seems to be a list of normal occurrences, with a “but” that follows. See if you can complete the phrases below.

Do not rebuke an older man, but...

Honor widows, but...

She who is truly a widow, but...

Command these things, but...

Let a widow be enrolled, but...

Those with believing masters must not be disrespectful, but...

Are the above commands consistent with the Torah, or might there be another document or method by which the Gentile believers in Ephesus could learn “the teachings that accord with godliness?”

Paul begins his final point by taking aim at the false teachers. He defines them this way:

“If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness,”

(1 Timothy 6:3 ESV)

I think the key word in this verse is “sound.” The “sound” words of our L-rd are added to “the teaching that accords with godliness.” Paul has already made clear (v1:10) that the Torah is applicable to teach those who are Torah-less and disobedient to “sound” doctrine.

The Greek here is *ὑγιαίνω* (*hugainō*). This word is used 12 times in the Apostolic Scriptures. Luke uses it three times, such as,

*“And Yeshua answered them,
“Those who are **well** have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.”*

(Luke 5:31 ESV, emphasis mine)

John uses it once,

*“Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and
that you may be in good **health**, as it goes well with your soul.”*

(3 John 1:2 ESV, emphasis mine)

Every other reference is in Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus! Paul was most concerned about his flocks being taught the wrong doctrine. **Read 1 Timothy 6:3 – 10** and summarize your understanding of the false teacher’s behavior and motivation.

This one paragraph has spawned aphorisms about death (There is no luggage rack on a hearse.) as well as inaccurate quotes (Money is the root of all evil.)

Paul gave advice to both Timothy and Titus, and for those of us who desire to be men and women of G-d. He has given similar advice to the assembly in Corinth, too. FLEE! Run away!!

- Flee from *sexual immorality*.
- Flee from *idolatry*.
- Flee from *controversy* and *covetousness*.
- Flee *youthful passions*.

Nestled in the diatribe against the false teachers is one of my favorite quotes.

*“But **godliness** with contentment is great gain.”*

(1 Timothy 6:6 ESV, emphasis mine)

Godliness has been Paul’s theme throughout for these two men. Of the 15 references to godliness or piety in the Apostolic Scriptures, Paul uses 10 of them with these young men. He juxtaposes the flight *from* sin with the pursuit *towards* godliness. **Read 1 Timothy 6:11 – 16.**

Notice all the strong action words? List as many as you can.

The word for “fight” is the root from which we get the English for *agonize*. That’s quite a struggle. Paul sums it all up with, “keep the commandment.” What is curious about this statement?

Paul summarizes the entire Torah by using “commandment” in the singular. The Master did the same in Matthew 15 and the parallel passage in Mark 7.

*“You leave **the commandment** of God and hold to the tradition of men.”*

*And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting **the commandment** of God in order to establish your tradition!”*

(Mark 7:8–9 ESV, emphasis mine)

Paul used the same literary device in his letter to the Roman assembly.

*“I was once alive apart from the Torah,
but when **the commandment** came, sin came alive and I died.
The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me.*

*For sin, seizing an opportunity through **the commandment**,
deceived me and through it killed me.”*

(Romans 7:9–11 ESV)

With this context and usage in mind, now paraphrase Paul’s admonition to Timothy.

*“Keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach
until the appearing of our L-rd Yeshua the Messiah.”*

(1 Timothy 6:14 ESV)

Is this a universal admonition, or is it anachronistic to believe this applies to the Body of Messiah today?

Read 1 Timothy 6:17 – 21.

Review

1. What is the root of all evil?
2. What does it mean to “keep the commandment of G-d” and how does this differ from “keeping the commandments of G-d?”

Lesson Fifty-Three

Read 1 Peter 1 – 2:11. Compare Peter's opening of the letter to his recipient's reference in the second chapter.

"Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul."

(1 Peter 2:11 ESV)

Knowing that *Paul* was the Apostle to the Gentiles, to whom did *Peter* write his letter? Be specific.

Notice the location of the assemblies to whom he is writing.



Did we not read of Paul's missionary journeys to these areas? To whom was Paul ministering? Does this change your answer?

The only other reference to the Greek word translated in both references as "exiles" is only found in Hebrews.

“These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.”

(Hebrews 11:13 ESV)

The writer of Hebrews refers to those with faith before the Jews were redeemed.

- Strangers and exiles (Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah)

While Peter has used several different modifiers to this word “exiles,” it seems like he may be referring to a similar group of “believers” that are *not* Jewish.

- Elect exiles of the Dispersion (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia)
- Sojourners and exiles (Conduct among the Gentiles)

Is Peter encouraging Gentiles living among the nations, or diaspora Jews living among Gentiles, or *Gentile believers* living among the nations? I think it’s that latter.

Even though Peter calls his readers a “chosen race,” a “royal priesthood,” and a “holy nation,” and a “people for his own possession,” terms used specifically of the Jews, he says that they (we) were “called out of darkness into His marvelous light.” Once we were not a people, but now we are G-d’s people. Read the following passages, in context, and draw a conclusion regarding who these “people” delivered from darkness are. Isaiah 9:2, 35:5, 42:7, Acts 26:18 Ephesians 5:8. Finally, compare your analysis with 2 Peter 1:1. Write your conclusions below.

We speak of being “born again” as if it was a common term. It turns out that “born again” in the famous passage with Nicodemus (John 3) is actually better translated as “born *from above*.” The term “born *again*” is only found twice in the Apostolic Scriptures – and both are in this letter from Peter (1:3, 23).

Peter says that we should be “holy in all our conduct.” He supports this with a quote from the Torah (Leviticus 11:44) and goes on to explain how we purify our souls – obedience to the Torah. This conduct is juxtaposed to those who do not believe. They stumble over The Rock because they disobey the word of G-d, the Torah. Write your thoughts.

Read 1 Peter 2:12 – 3:12. Summarize Peter’s view and concern for our behavior, if we call ourselves believers in *Yeshua* the Messiah.

Read 1 Peter 3:13 – 4:19. Peter gives some good arguments for suffering. Explain his rationale.

I find it surprising that Peter lumps murderers, thieves, and evildoers together with “meddlers” (4:15). This is the only use of this Greek word in the Bible, but Paul used a similar phrase in three different letters. Read them below and comment.

*“Aspire to live quietly, and to **mind your own affairs**, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you,”*

(1 Thessalonians 4:11 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but **busybodies**.”*

(2 Thessalonians 3:11 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and **busybodies**, saying what they should not.”*

(1 Timothy 5:13 ESV, emphasis mine)

Read 1 Peter 5. Does this remind you of Paul’s admonitions to Timothy and Titus?

Review

1. How can a woman’s obedience to the Torah impact her non-believing husband?
2. Name three ways that Peter’s letter is similar to Paul’s letters.
3. What is the character trait promoted and encouraged most by Peter?

Lesson Fifty-Four

We finally come to an awesome description of *Yeshua* and His work. It's tremendous! However, I'm not sure we will find much *halachah* to study. Our study is not focused on detailed theology, but this book is particularly important to me because of the extraordinary English translators *bias*. Don't be surprised if we breeze through some passages you might prefer to dissect further. The main literary element used by the writer is the Hebrew *kol v'komer* argument, from light to heavy. We will see "how much more" or "how much better" our Savior and His ministry is. The Greek word used in these comparisons is normally κρείττων (*kreittōn*). 13 of the 18 occurrences in the Scriptures are right here in Hebrews.

Read Hebrews 1:1 – 2:13. The writer begins by comparing *Yeshua* and angels.

"having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs."

(Hebrews 1:4 ESV)

The Greek word ἐκκλησία (*ekklēsia*) appears in the Apostolic Writings 114 times and is translated as "church" 108 times. The translators chose to use "assembly" and "congregation" the other six times. Let's see if we can identify their reasoning.

Of the four times *ekklēsia* is rendered "assembly," it is one passage in Acts and once here in Hebrews. You'll remember the riot that occurred in Ephesus when the crowd was crying out "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" for about two hours.

*"Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the **assembly** was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together... But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular **assembly**... And when he had said these things, he dismissed the **assembly**."*

(Acts 19:32, 39, 41 ESV, emphasis mine)

*"and to the **assembly** of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,"*

(Hebrews 12:23 ESV, emphasis mine)

Surely the "assembly of the firstborn" includes both Jews and Gentiles. Perhaps the translators were focusing on *who* was in the assembly? What are your thoughts?

Of the two times *ekklēsia* is rendered as “congregation,” again, Dr. Luke is the other author, along with the writer of Hebrews. Stephen’s great confession before his stoning is the context.

*“This is the one who was in the **congregation** in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us.”*

(Acts 7:38 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, “I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the **congregation** I will sing your praise.””*

(Hebrews 2:11–12 ESV, emphasis mine)

The writer of Hebrews is quoting Psalm 22. Do you sense a more stronger focus on *Jewish history* and identity in these two references? This does not appear to be an isolated translation choice by the English Standard, as the same or similar methodology is used in all of the modern translations I have researched. Again, write your thoughts below.

The writer of Hebrews now launches into a comparison that Paul used in 2 Corinthians 3, comparing his ministry to Moses.

“Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts.”

(2 Corinthians 3:15 ESV)

Read Hebrews 2:14 – 4:13. Consider how the Gentile believer could *possibly* understand the arguments if he was not familiar with the Torah! There are quotes from Genesis 2, Numbers 12 and 14, Exodus 14, 20 and 31, Deuteronomy 1, 18 and 34, Joshua 1 and 8, Psalm 16, 33, 78, 95, 105 and 119, Isaiah 44 and 49, Job 26 and 34 and Jeremiah 23!

Review

1. In your own words, why is *Yeshua* greater than angels?
2. In your own words, how is *Yeshua* greater than Moses?
3. Are you proud of *Yeshua*’s work on your behalf? If so, in what way?

Lesson Fifty-Five

Read Hebrews 4:14 – 6:12. The writer is about to launch into the priesthood of *Yeshua*, but first wants to admonish his readers. They have become dull of hearing. This is also translated as “sluggish obedience.” He references the “basic principles of the oracles of G-d,” which he puts against the “word of righteousness.” He goes on to teach about the “powers of discernment.”

“But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”

(Hebrews 5:14 ESV)

Wow! This is a great explanation of what our walk is all about in Messiah. By diligent learning, we gain the power of discernment, being trained by *constant* practice, able to distinguish good from evil. I love this statement. Describe in your own words, if the writer is referencing the Torah, or a spiritual understanding from above as to what is right and wrong, or perhaps some other method.

Let’s look at that priesthood. **Read Hebrews 6:13 – 7:28.** The argument begins with a change of law, since the Levitical priests descend from Aaron, as our Savior descends from Judah. But it is true that *Yeshua* was pronounced a priest in the Psalms.

*“The L-RD has sworn and will not change his mind,
“You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.””*

(Psalms 110:4 ESV)

While it may sound like the writer of Hebrews is “dissing” the Torah, it’s the same concept of which Paul wrote to the Romans and to Titus.

*“For G-d has done what the law, **weakened** by the flesh, could not do.
By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin,
he condemned sin in the flesh,”*

(Romans 8:3 ESV, emphasis mine)

*“But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are **unprofitable** and worthless.”*

(Titus 3:9 ESV, emphasis mine)

What do you think about this?

The writer claims that the Levitical priests were appointed without an oath, but the word of the oath which appointed *Yeshua* came later than the Torah? How so? Is this extra-biblical??

Let's look at the covenant now. **Read Hebrews 8:1 – 9:1.** Messiah would *not* be a priest if He were on earth, since the Levitical priesthood handles that ministry. The Aaronic priests serve in a copy of the heavenly tabernacle, just as we saw at the end of Exodus. They did everything according to what they were commanded. Moses did it all perfectly – and the presence of the L-rd rested in the tabernacle, and Moses was not able to enter it. The Aaronic ministry provided the necessary sacrifices (Leviticus 1 – 5) to allow Moses and the people to draw near to G-d. This is why, when there is another Temple in Jerusalem, it will certainly be appropriate for the Aaronic priesthood to resume their ministry, allowing G-d's people to again draw near to Him *physically*. This is not *Yeshua's* ministry. Comment on this.

Following is an *amplified* version of Hebrews 8, the BYV (*ben Yosef* version). Here is how this version was translated.

1. Words not found in the Greek text have been removed.
2. Greek words previously used in the book of Hebrews were changed to consistent with former usage.
3. *Torah* was used to replace the Greek νόμος (*nomos*.)
4. Amplification was added in (*parenthetical italics*.)
5. Particular care was taken in verse 8:13 to render the amplification consistent with both previous *and* future chapters of Hebrews referring to a future hope. As can be seen in the list below, this topic is touched on briefly until the last verse of chapter 8 launches into a focus toward the *olam haba*, the world to come, when *HaShem* puts everything right again.

- 2:5 the world to come
- 6:5 the age to come
- 9:9 the present time
- 9:10 a time of reformation
- 9:11 the good things to come
- 9:28 appear a second time
- 10:1 the good things to come
- 10:13 waiting for that time
- 11:20 things to come
- 12:10-11 a short time... the moment... afterwards
- 13:14 the city which is to come

Hebrews 8 BYV (*ben Yosef* version)

^{7:28} For the *Torah* appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath which came after the *Torah*, a Son, is perfect forever.

¹ Now the main point in what has been said (*in the previous chapters*) is this: we have such a high priest, (*Yeshua*), who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ² a minister in the (*holy place*) and in the true tabernacle, which *HaShem* pitched, not man. ³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this (*One*) also have something to offer. ⁴ Now if He, (*that is, Yeshua*), were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those (*priests*) who offer the gifts according to the *Torah*; ⁵ who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly (*things*), just as Moses was warned by G-d when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “SEE,” He says, “THAT YOU MAKE (*all things*) ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.”

⁶ Now He, (*that is, Yeshua*), has obtained a more excellent ministry (*than the Aaronic priests*), by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. ⁷ For if that first (*situation, that is, a priesthood that is unable to cleanse from sin, provide perfection or secure the worshiper a place in the world to come*) had been blameless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

⁸ For finding fault, He says,

“BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS *HaSHEM*, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; ⁹ NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS *HaSHEM*. ¹⁰ FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS *HaSHEM*: I WILL PUT MY *TORAH* INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE IT ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR G-D, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. ¹¹ AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, ‘KNOW *HaSHEM*,’ FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. ¹² FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE.”

¹³ When He said, “New,” He has made the first (*covenant and its priesthood*) unnecessary. (*This is not to say that the first is unnecessary now! For as long as we are in this present world, we need the first. However, as the world to come draws closer, the Aaronic priesthood*) is becoming obsolete, growing old and is near disappearing, (*since by that time we will not be able to become unclean, and will have no need to draw near when things are put right again¹, that is, back to how they were in the beginning, in the good things to come.*)

¹ δῖορθωσις (dióρθōsis) is translated in the ESV as “reformation” in 9:10. This is a medical term used in extra-biblical literature to describe straightening broken bones. Literally, to make straight, right or correct. I used this term in v8:13.

^{9:1} Now the first (*situation*) had requirements of service in the earthly holy place. ² For there was a tabernacle prepared, the first, in which were the lampstand and the table and the consecrated bread; this is called the holy place.

Write your thoughts on chapter 8 now, considering the amplification.

Review

1. The writer of Hebrews has gone to great lengths to demonstrate *Yeshua* and His ministry are better than many different things. Name the comparisons.
2. Name some things that are the same in both the old and new covenants.
3. Name what is different between the old and new covenants.

Lesson Fifty-Six

We have already seen that the book of Hebrews is confusing to average church-goers, and the bias of the translators, seen in the last chapter certainly does not help the situation. As we look to the remainder of chapter 9, let me remind you of v9:1, reviewed in last week's lesson.

*"Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship
and an earthly place of holiness."*

(Hebrews 9:1 ESV)

I have underscored "covenant" in the verse above because the word does **not** appear in the Greek text. By quoting from Rick Spurlock's excellent Hebrews study, "How Much More," available from Bereans Online (bereansonline.org), we can see the author's use of "first" πρῶτος (*prōtos*) and "second" δεῦτερος (*deuteros*) are being used to demonstrate how the two parts of the earthly tabernacle work together as an example of how the work of *Yeshua* correlates to the work of the Aaronic priesthood. Here is Rick's *Sh'ma Chazak Version* of Hebrews 9. Every time the Greek *protos* is used, he replaces it with "visible part." Every time the Greek *deuteros* is used, he replaces it with "invisible part." Of course, he has corrected the tenses of the Greek to reflect them correctly. **Read Hebrews 9:1-11** in your Bible, then the version below.

*"Now even **the first** had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. For a tent was prepared, **the visible part**, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the sanctuary; and behind **the invisible part's** veil the part of the tabernacle called the Holiest of All, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.*

*Now when these things had been prepared, the priests always went into **the visible part**, performing their service. But into **the invisible part** only the high priest went alone once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offered for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people. By this the Holy Spirit was illustrating this point: that the way into **the invisible part**, the Holiest of All, was not yet made evident while **the visible part** still has standing, or is in use.*

*It (**the visible part**) is a parable for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper – concerned only with food and drink, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.*

*But Messiah came as a High Priest of the good that is coming, with the greater
and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands,
that is, not of this creation."*

(Hebrews 9:1–11 Sh'ma Chazak Version)

Write a comparison of the two versions. Do you have a clearer understanding of the author's intent?

If the *visible part* of the tabernacle is, as v9:9 says, a parable about the *olam hazeh* (this present world), then the work of the Aaronic priest (sacrifices, worship, etc.) is all temporal, focusing on the physical world in which we live. The *invisible part* of the tabernacle represents the *olam haba* (the world to come) and it is in this venue that Messiah's sacrifice and priesthood is a reality. His work is not temporary, it is eternal. He serves forever as a priest in the order of *Malchi-Tzedek* (King of Righteousness.) His sacrifice, made on our behalf, was made once and for all in the *eternal* tabernacle. Write your thoughts on this reality.

Read the following verses and comment on the eternal "reality" of our G-d and King.

*"To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only G-d,
be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."*

(1 Timothy 1:17 ESV)

"He is the image of the invisible G-d, the firstborn of all creation."

(Colossians 1:15 ESV)

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with G-d, and the Word
was G-d. He was in the beginning with G-d. All things were made through him,
and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and
the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness
has not overcome it..."*

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

(John 1:1–5, 14 ESV)

Now, we come to the ultimate memorization verse.

“For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to G-d, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living G-d.”

(Hebrews 9:13–14 ESV)

If you believe that the sacrifice of *Yeshua* is in some way the ultimate sacrifice, or so much better than the Temple sacrifices, you are making a “category mistake.” Apples and oranges, as they say. The blood of *Yeshua* was presented in a completely different tabernacle, under laws and conditions in the purview of a priesthood unique to that of *Malchi-Tzedek*. The verse above teaches us that trying to compare the sacrifices of bulls and goats with *Yeshua*’s is impossible.

Read Hebrews 9:15 – 28. You should be able to understand the comparison of the first covenant with the new covenant. These covenants operate in different domains, and therefore different laws regulating each. The first covenant is not deleted, changed or done away with because there is a new one.

This brings us to the second awesome memorization verse in Hebrews.

“For since the Torah has a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.”

(Hebrews 10:1 ESV)

Right? The Torah is for the Aaronic priests and points to the wonderful *olam haba*. What we do here, with a Temple, has nothing to do with, and can never, by the same sacrifices make us perfect. **Read Hebrews 10:1 – 18.** Comment below.

Unfortunately, the next part of Hebrews 10 has been misunderstood. The problem, I suspect, aside from being completely removed from the realities brought to light above, is reading the next paragraph out of context. **Read Hebrews 10:19 – 31.** Write your thoughts below.

Here’s my paraphrase of Hebrews 10:19 – 22.

“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence entering through the blood of Yeshua, by the new and living way that he dedicated for us through the veil, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of

G-d, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water, in a way the Aaronic priesthood could never do.”

(Hebrews 10:19–22 ESV, elaboration mine)

This does *not* mean we can foolishly treat the Holy One, blessed is He, as our “buddy” or “pal” because of a misunderstanding of the Scripture. We have been granted a wonderful gift by the Creator of All. Let us approach him (spiritually now, physically later) with boldness in the finished work of our Savior. G-d forbid we act with a flippancy that will bring dishonor and shame to us and our families. Make your comments below.

Did you notice the reference to the Torah in v10:28? Where would we find out about the need for two witnesses in a capital case? Not to mention the references from Deuteronomy and Isaiah.

Complete the chapter by reading **Hebrews 10:32 – 39**. Comment on your “better and abiding possession,” and what you have been promised.

Review

1. Some say that Hebrews 9 is about the tabernacle. What do you say?
2. Is it more dangerous to reject the Law of Moses (Torah) than to reject *Yeshua* as the Messiah? Explain.

Lesson Fifty-Seven

Read Hebrews 11. Write your thoughts about the chapter below.

This chapter is known as the “Hall of Faith” by church goers. The faithful, the elect, the assembly, the congregation... these are all terms we’ve used throughout this study for those who have a place in the world to come.

How many of those listed as examples in this chapter are “before Abraham?” List them.

How many are “after Abraham, but before the Torah?” List them.

How many are “after the Torah, but before the cross?” List them.

The author of Hebrews makes clear there is one thing in common among all these heroes of the faith. This is very important. What is it?

If you wrote that these stalwarts of the faith were a testimony. They were commended. However, while that’s true, it’s not the point about *their faith* I was pointing out. All of these faith examples did *not* receive the promise – ingathering and eternal life in the World To Come. They have to wait – for us – and all of the faithful who die in Messiah, before His coming.

So while we wait, how should we conduct ourselves? Read Hebrews 12.

If most of the witnesses described in chapter 11 were before the cross, some even at Creation, when did the Author and Perfecter of our faith accomplish this work? Examine these verses and write your conclusions.

*“Then the King will say to those on his right,
‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for
you from the foundation of the world.’”*

(Matthew 25:34 ESV)

“Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.”

(Ephesians 1:4 ESV)

*“For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,
“As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest,’”
although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.”*

(Hebrews 4:3 ESV)

“He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in G-d, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in G-d.”

(1 Peter 1:20–21 ESV)

“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.”

(Revelation 17:8 ESV)

The writer speaks of the holiness of the assembly of the firstborn. Without holiness, we do not have a place in the World To Come. How would the recipients of this letter understand and strive for holiness?

Read Hebrews 13. What one point do you take away from this chapter?

Review

1. Does the book of Hebrews encourage you or discourage you? How much better is your faith in *Yeshua*?
2. What are some behaviors you will change, or habits you will break, as a result of reading Hebrews?

Lesson Fifty-Eight

Read **2 Timothy** in its entirety.

Now return to 2 Timothy chapter 1. Paul uses two references that are noteworthy. First, we have a holy calling. Second, Timothy is to follow the pattern of sound words which he heard from Paul. What is it that sets us apart (holy) and what are those sound words? Write your answer below.

In chapter 2, Paul again refers to what Timothy heard from him in the presence of many witnesses. Is this referring to the “sound words” of chapter 1?

In Paul’s analogy regarding the athlete, to what rules might he be referring? Could it be the word of truth which must be rightly handled? Explain.

Chapter 3 opens with a list of very undesirable attributes. Is it possible to ascribe negative connotation to an attribute without a reliable, universal standard of behavior? Other than the references to the word of truth and others we have looked at in the previous chapters, is there any other reference to which Paul alludes? Note your conclusions below.

Paul applauds Timothy’s habit of mimicking his behavior. Paul has often asserted that he himself follows the walk of *Yeshua* of Nazareth. Like rungs on a ladder, we follow the steps of the Master, as do His disciples and the disciples of their disciples... Here’s another verse to put to memory.

*“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching,
for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

(2 Timothy 3:16–17 ESV)

When Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, in probably 65 CE, what would Timothy have understood to be “all Scripture?”

In Lesson 52 we learned about Paul's use of *ὑγιαίνω* (*hugainō*) regarding something that is medically sound. He uses it again in chapter 4. His description of a "time to come" may have actually come. List his points and provide your own examples from our current culture.

Review

1. Does Paul sound despondent? Would you, given the same circumstances? Why or why not?
2. How would you summarize the letter Paul wrote to Timothy (their last known communication)?

Lesson Fifty-Nine

Read 2 Peter. Is there any question that this apostle is writing to Gentiles like us? His opening paragraph begs the question, how can one know virtue or godliness if one does not know the Torah? He certainly understands that there are righteous and unrighteous men. How does he make the distinction?

In v2:21, Peter equates the way of righteousness with the holy commandments. How do you understand this statement?

In chapter 3, Peter reminds us to remember “the predictions of the holy prophets.” Where would we find those?

How can we, as Gentiles, understand how to live a life of holiness and godliness? Does Peter not assume that we would know HOW to do so? Explain.

“You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.”

(2 Peter 3:17 ESV)

Torah-less people are all around. These are those who do not know the law – Torah. How should we react?

Read Jude. Do you find it odd, as I do, that Jude says that *Yeshua* “saved a people out of the land of Egypt?” The destruction of the non-believers is attributed to Him as well. Write your thoughts.

If you were not very familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures, I doubt that you would be able to follow Jude’s argument from Cain, to Balaam, to Korah. He also brings in a prophecy from Enoch that I have not read in Genesis. Explain below.

Read 1 John. How does one “practice the truth?” Write your answer below.

Who defines sin?

His word, according to John, must be IN us. How do we do that?

According to John, how do we know that we have come to know the Master? What is that “special sauce” that demonstrates that we *know* Him?

According to John, the word must abide in us. To what word is he referring?

How do we “practice righteousness?”

In v3:4, John equates sin with Torah-lessness. Explain.

So if practicing righteousness is to follow the Torah, then according to John, those who do *not* follow the Torah are sinning. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

Who is it that abides in G-d?

What is “the love of G-d?”

John opens chapter 5 with an interesting statement.

*“By this we know that we love the children of G-d,
when we love G-d and obey his commandments.
For this is the love of G-d, that we keep his commandments.
And his commandments are not burdensome.”*

(1 John 5:2–3 ESV)

Explain this in your own words.

Review

1. Do you get the impression that John expects his recipients to understand what sin is?
2. Peter, Jude and John don't seem to be interested in mortgages, weeding the lawn or watering the shrubs. At the same time, they don't seem to be concerned about your specific *halalchah*. Write your thoughts below.

Lesson Sixty

Read 2 John. John's focus, again on love, is crisp. His claim of love is that we "walk according to His commandments." What do you think he means by "abiding in the teaching of Messiah?"

Read 3 John. It sounds like Diotrephes is in big trouble. What's his biggest problem?

Read Revelation 1. The Lord was raised in about 33 CE. This letter was written about 95 CE. The seven churches that are in Asia should be familiar to you. Go back to Lesson 21 and review the journeys of Paul near Ephesus (on the coast) during his second missionary journey and you'll be reminded of the six assemblies in a rough circle nearby. Revelation 1:11 lists these cities. What are they?

What would catch the attention of John's readers as he describes the "son of man" IF they knew the Hebrew Scriptures? Suppose they didn't? Could such a one understand why John fell at His feet as though dead? Explain your answer.

Read Revelation 2 – 3. Repentance is directed for the assembly at Ephesus. How does one understand this concept outside of the Torah?

Who would "say they are Jews" but are not? Would that be the Messianic community? Perhaps it is the replacement theology Christians? What are your thoughts?

The book of James is such a hearty Christian book, yet it is the only place in the Apostolic Scriptures that the Greek συναγωγή (*sunagōgē*) is translated as "assembly" instead of "synagogue." Perhaps that's just too Jewish. Read James 2:2 and comment below.

Those in Pergamum would have trouble understanding the teaching of Balaam without a knowledge of the Torah. Do you think it was assumed for John's recipients?

The assembly in Thyatira was encouraged to "keep *Yeshua's* works" until the end. What do you think this means?

The assembly in Sardis was also "dinged" for their works. They were "incomplete." Are they *mitzvot*? How do you understand these works?

Once again, we have a reference to the "synagogue of Satan" in the address to Philadelphia. To what do you think this refers?

The final assembly, Laodicea, was told that being neither cold nor warm, *Yeshua* would "spit them out of His mouth." The word for "spit" is ἐμέω (*emeō*), from which we get our English word *emesis* – the action or process of vomiting. It doesn't sound good for Laodicea...

As we have read through the messages to each of the seven assemblies, each one has opened with a specific description of *Yeshua* and ended with a promise to the one who overcomes or conquers. (Incidentally, the Greek for "overcome" or "conquer" is our English word *Nike*, like the sneakers. **Just do it!**) Read through each of the seven introductions and promises and draw whatever conclusions you can. Write your answer below.

The words of Him Who holds the seven stars in his right hand, Who walks among the seven golden lampstands.	To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of G-d.
The words of the first and the last, Who died and came to life.	The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.
The words of Him who has the sharp two-edged sword.	To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.
The words of the Son of G-d Who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.	The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even

	as I myself have received authority from my Father. And I will give him the morning star.
The words of Him Who has the seven spirits of G-d and the seven stars.	The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels.
The words of the Holy One, the True One, Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one will shut, Who shuts and no one opens.	The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my G-d. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my G-d, and the name of the city of my G-d, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my G-d out of heaven, and my own new name.
The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of G-d's creation.	The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on His throne.

Review

1. With which assembly can you most identify? Why?
2. Summarize the message to all seven assemblies in a single statement.
3. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies" is repeated to every assembly. What does this phrase mean?

Lesson Sixty-One

Read Revelation 4. This is an amazing description. Without the Torah, it would be unbelievable. However, if one has read the prophet Ezekiel from some 600 years before Messiah's advent, one would see an amazing consistency in the vision.

"And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had a human likeness, but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot. And they sparkled like burnished bronze. Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings thus: their wings touched one another. Each one of them went straight forward, without turning as they went. As for the likeness of their faces, each had a human face. The four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle."

(Ezekiel 1:5–10 ESV)

John's describes these living creatures, as calling to one another, as the prophet Isaiah heard as well.

"In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the L-rd sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the L-RD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!""

(Isaiah 6:1–3 ESV)

Make some notes on these things.

Read Revelation 5 – 7. Were there any people sealed that were *not* Jews? Yet the great multitude that no one could number were from all tribes and peoples and languages. Write your thoughts below.

Read Revelation 8 – 9. One of my favorite verses (v 8:1) is here. Write your thoughts about the silence and the time-frame.

Paul wrote of a mystery, and we read of the same here. What is that mystery?

John was told to eat the little scroll (v10:9)... Seems odd. Consider the command to Ezekiel.

*"And he said to me, "Son of man, eat whatever you find here.
Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.""*

(Ezekiel 3:1 ESV)

Can you make any sense of this? Would it make *less sense* if you had no knowledge of the Torah?

Read Revelation 11. There are several time references. The first is forty-two months. The second is 1,260 days. For anyone who has studied eschatology (study of the end times), the seven year period, or two 3 ½ year periods are common discussion. Perhaps you've read in Daniel about a time (1), times (2) and half a time (½)? That's 3 ½ years. 3 ½ years is 42 months. 3 ½ years is 1277 days... Hmm... We need another Bible study! For how long will the world gaze at the dead bodies of the witnesses? Write your thoughts.

The 24 elders proclaim that a reward is coming to G-d's servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear His name. Do you include yourself in that group? Why or why not?

During our lessons in the book of Hebrews we described *two temples* and *two priesthoods*. One was heavenly, the abode of G-d, and one was earthly. The chapter ends with the ultimate clarification, that "the pattern" which *Moshe Rabbeinu* (Moses our Teacher) saw on the mountain was indeed the original, true, heavenly tabernacle.

*"Then G-d's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was
seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of
thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail."*

(Revelation 11:19 ESV)

What do you make of this, having now studied Hebrews?

Read Revelation 12. We close with the last verse of this chapter. What a fitting and wonderful description of the people of G-d.

“Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.”

(Revelation 12:17 ESV)

Most commentators agree that the “woman” of Revelation 12 is Israel. Considering this, who do you believe is being described in the verse above. Be specific!

Read Revelation 13 – 22. Make notes of any *halachic* direction or comments that you find.

Review

1. How many groups are described in Revelation 12:17? Explain your answer.
2. The Bible opens with the garden of G-d. It closes with the same description. What do you make of this?
3. Having done this study, can you speculate on why there is no temple in the New Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven?

Lesson Sixty-Two

Summary

It's been a long study. We have walked through the entire Apostolic Scriptures *chronologically*. We have examined the setting, timing, comments and events in every single book. From the Gospels of Messiah, through the Acts of the Apostles, into the Letters from the Apostles to the Revelation of Messiah. Let's review what we've learned.

The Gospel accounts of *Yeshua's* teachings are consistent. *Yeshua* quoted the *Tanakh* often and expected his hearers and followers to understand this. He preaches repentance to the children of Israel, drawing them back to the Torah, the instructions from G-d for how His followers should live.

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life."

(John 5:39–40 ESV)

Yeshua makes it clear that the Torah (the Scriptures) are where one would search for the source of life – and it is these, that speak of Him. For Jew and Greek, the answer is consistent through the Gospels. He goes further to actually invite Gentiles, such as we, into His kingdom.

*"Come to me, **all** who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

(Matthew 11:28–30 ESV, emphasis mine)

*"For **everyone** who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."*

(Luke 11:10 ESV, emphasis mine)

We found that *Yeshua's* first recorded interaction with a Gentile was positive. He was surprised by the degree of faith and agreed to healing the Centurion's servant. This is a very inclusive perspective of the Master. This was certainly not the case for the chief priests and religious leaders that persecuted Him. *Yeshua* also speaks of sheep that are *not* of the Jewish fold. Yet He never intimates that there is a different rule of living or standard of conduct for these non-Jews.

We saw that *Yeshua's* description of those who keep the commandments, love G-d and treat others properly are righteous. He goes further, implying no restriction on those who love Him.

“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

(John 14:21 ESV)

In the Acts of the Apostles, we focused on their *actions*, as well as their words. What was the message? Faith in *Yeshua* as the *Mashiach* alone is sufficient to have a place in the world to come – yet the question remains, “How should one live *after* this life renewal?”

We found Peter and Paul to be crystal clear. Those who turn to G-d through the finished work of *Yeshua* are expected to live according to the instructions of G-d, the Torah. Continued disobedience became a sign that regeneration had not occurred. As we reflected on the *acts* of the Apostles, we noticed that *after the resurrection* they persisted in their Torah observance and Temple participation. In this regard they not only allowed Gentiles to participate but encouraged Torah obedience, writing frequently to Gentile assemblies to study the Scriptures.

We did not find a single reference to a secondary or alternative standard for living, either for Jews or non-Jews. During our study of this portion of the Apostolic Writings, we realized that the birth of “the church” could not possibly have been a) at the birth of Messiah, b) at the cross of Messiah, or c) at the resurrection of Messiah. The beginning of the assembly of Messiah, or the *Israel of G-d* had to be from the beginning, from creation, as we read of men and women in the body of Messiah who lived long before Abraham, the first Jew. This is, of course, born out by the Scripture.

“There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.”

(Exodus 12:49 ESV)

If we look to the Talmud and the tradition of the Elders with regard to Gentile conversion, in order to be joined to Israel, we find a general consensus that the non-Jew must do these things.

Get circumcised
Pass through the <i>mikveh</i> waters
Make sacrifice in the Temple
Commit to keeping the Torah

The first point was a major speed bump for the Apostle Paul. Doing anything in our own strength to effect a place in the world to come was impossible. If we rephrase what CHAZAL (*chachameinu zichronam livracha*) “Our sages of blessed memory” meant by circumcision to “join yourself to Israel” then Paul would have agreed, as should we.

“Remember that you were at that time separated from Messiah, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without G-d in the world.”

(Ephesians 2:12 ESV)

“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

(John 4:22 ESV)

I submit that if we rephrase the first requirement of the Sages to be what they intended (joining Israel) then we would agree with their summary, as this is what we have done.

Join Israel and her Messiah
Pass through the <i>mikveh</i> waters
Make sacrifice in the Temple
Commit to keeping the Torah

Oddly enough, if one does keep the commandments of G-d, it's only a matter of time (less than a year) when one would be presented with this command.

“If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the L-RD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.”

(Exodus 12:48 ESV)

So the end result...

Join Israel and her Messiah
Pass through the <i>mikveh</i> waters
Make sacrifice in the Temple
Commit to keeping the Torah
Get circumcised

We could rephrase the list.

Commit to follow Messiah REPENT
Pass through the <i>mikveh</i> waters BAPTIZE
Make sacrifice in the Temple BE A LIVING SACRIFICE
Commit to keeping the Torah KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS
Get circumcised IDENTIFY WITH ISRAEL

Review

1. What are your thoughts on this summary?
2. Did you find any other references to external or extra-biblical guides for living?
3. Has this study changed your walk? How? Be specific.
4. Jews choose what level of commitment and *halachah* they keep. Do you think it should be the same for non-Jews?

Appendix

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English Standard Version with Key Numbers

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Some Responses to Nehemia Gordon's Rejoinder

Tim Hegg

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Lesson Summaries

Each week the previous lesson is reviewed in class. The audio files are in the iTunes podcast for *Men of Torah*. The handouts for each review session are in this section.

Note that some classes do not require a handout.

GotQuestions.org

Question: "Does the Bible record the death of the apostles? How did each of the apostles die?"

Answer: The only apostle whose death the Bible records is James (Acts 12:2). King Herod had James "put to death with the sword," likely a reference to beheading. The circumstances of the deaths of the other apostles are related through church tradition, so we should not put too much weight on any of the other accounts. The most commonly accepted church tradition in regard to the death of an apostle is that the apostle Peter was crucified upside-down in Rome in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy (John 21:18). The following are the most popular "traditions" concerning the deaths of the other apostles:

Matthew suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, killed by a sword wound. John faced martyrdom when he was boiled in a huge basin of boiling oil during a wave of persecution in Rome. However, he was miraculously delivered from death. John was then sentenced to the mines on the prison island of Patmos. He wrote his prophetic book of Revelation on Patmos. The apostle John was later freed and returned to what is now modern-day Turkey. He died as an old man, the only apostle to die peacefully.

James, the brother of Jesus (not officially an apostle), was the leader of the church in Jerusalem. He was thrown from the southeast pinnacle of the temple (over a hundred feet down) when he refused to deny his faith in Christ. When they discovered that he survived the fall, his enemies beat James to death with a club. This is thought to be the same pinnacle where Satan had taken Jesus during the temptation.

Bartholomew, also known as Nathanael, was a missionary to Asia. He witnessed in present-day Turkey and was martyred for his preaching in Armenia, being flayed to death by a whip. Andrew was crucified on an x-shaped cross in Greece. After being whipped severely by seven soldiers, they tied his body to the cross with cords to prolong his agony. His followers reported that when he was led toward the cross, Andrew saluted it in these words: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it." He continued to preach to his tormentors for two days until he died. The apostle Thomas was stabbed with a spear in India during one of his missionary trips to establish the church there. Matthias, the apostle chosen to replace the traitor Judas Iscariot, was stoned and then beheaded. The apostle Paul was tortured and then beheaded by the evil Emperor Nero in Rome in A.D. 67. There are traditions regarding the other apostles as well, but none with any reliable historical or traditional support.

It is not so important how the apostles died. What is important is the fact that they were all willing to die for their faith. If Jesus had not been resurrected, the disciples would have known it. People will not die for something they know to be a lie. The fact that all of the apostles were willing to die horrible deaths, refusing to renounce their faith in Christ, is tremendous evidence that they had truly witnessed the resurrection of Jesus Christ.