

Basic Torah

an Introduction to YHWH's Torah

by Peter Guiren

Preparation for this Study

As usual, before you read this study, I ask you to do four things :

Firstly, pray to only receive YHWH's truth, and to not be deceived by any false information.

Secondly, I challenge you to choose to be teachable – to decide to have an open mind.

Thirdly, please don't believe what I have written, but check the Scriptures to "test" that what has been written is correct. (1 Thes 5:21, Acts 17:11).

Fourthly, remember that we are studying to show ourselves approved to YHWH. (2 Tim 2:15).

Please refer to **Preparation for Studying YHWH's Word**, for more details.

Note : Please remember that **the foundation of all my studies must be the Bible, the inspired, revealed and written word of YHWH, in its original languages.**

Whenever I quote from YHWH's Word, in this study I am quoting from "The Scriptures" version of the Bible.

Introduction

One of the things I discovered about myself, is that **I am a student**. I love to learn things. When I was teaching young people science, mathematics, and several other subjects, I sometimes would ask them **why they are at school** ? Their answers would often vary a bit, but essentially, they would say "to learn science" or "to learn mathematics" or "to learn to get along with others". While I would agree with these answers, I would usually add, that they are there **"to learn, how to learn !"**. I would often make the statement that **"they will rarely use the vast majority of information that they learn at school"**, and many of them would be shocked by my comment. Sadly, most people are not taught specifically, "how to learn", and as such, rarely take the responsibility for their adult learning, to anywhere near its full potential.

I am a student of the Torah. I want to learn more and more of YHWH's truth. I hope you will remember from my study **"How do our Beliefs Systems Work"** (Click [Why do People Believe What They Believe](#) if you haven't), that I made the statement that "because of our ancestor's disobedience, we have inherited a mixture of YHWH's Truth and paganism.

As believers in Yahushua, it is therefore our job, with the Ruach's guidance, to sort out YHWH's truth from the great mixture of Truth and paganism. **We are commanded to live Torah- observant lives**. If you are not sure of this idea now, I believe this will become very clear, by the time you finish reading my study.

For this study, I have once again referred to the work of good teachers. Rabbi Ed Nydle, Glenn McWilliams, Mark Ensign, and of course, YHWH, Yahushua and several writers of the Bible, are my main sources for this teaching.

I'd like to begin with the prophet Jeremiah.

In **Jer 31:31**, YHWH says :

"See, the days are coming," declares יהוה, "when I shall make a new (renewed) covenant with the house of Yisra'el and with the house of Yahudah

The Hebrew word, from which the word, "new" is translated as *chadashah*. It is Strong's word # 2319, and means to **re-new**, as in a New Moon. YHWH doesn't create a brand new moon each month; He "re-news" the old one.

The "new" covenant that the Prophet Jeremiah is speaking of in verse 31, is "a renewal" of a covenant that had already been made with a body of people, the children of Israel – the covenant already exists, and so **there is no new covenant**. The only thing "new" is that YHWH will now put the Torah in the inwards parts of these people, and will write it on their hearts.

Jer 31:33 below tells us this, and we are reminded of it in **Heb 8:8-13**. It is also mentioned in **Heb 10:16-17**.

Heb 8:8-13

For finding fault with them, He says, "See, the days are coming," says יהוה, "when I shall conclude with the house of Yisra'el and with the house of Yehudah a renewed covenant, 8:9 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Mitsrayim, because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them," says יהוה.

8:10 "Because this is the covenant that I shall make with the house of Yisra'el after those days, says יהוה, giving My laws in their mind, and I shall write them on their hearts, and I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.

8:11 "And they shall by no means teach each one his neighbour, and each one his brother, saying, 'Know יהוה,' because they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

8:12 "Because I shall forgive their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawlessnesses I shall no longer remember."

8:13 By saying, 'renewed,' He has made the first old. Now what becomes old and growing aged is near disappearing.

There is a good teaching on why there needs to be a "re-newed" covenant in :

<http://www.messianicisrael.com/waters-in-the-wilderness/2008-2009/eikev.html>

It is to do with the idea that both the Houses of Israel and Judah were both unfaithful to YHWH, and so there needs to be a "new" marriage contract.

Special Note : If you are having difficulties with the idea, that the meaning of Hebrew words can change when translated into other languages, please refer to my study, "**How to Study the Bible**", which explains in detail, the several problems involved in translating the original language, Hebrew, into Greek, then into Latin, and finally, into English. Remember, **there is no such thing as an inspired translation of YHWH's Word**).

Jer 31:32-33 goes on to say :

32 not like the covenant I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Mitsrayim, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them," declares יהוה

*33 or this is the covenant I shall make with the house of Yisra'el after those days, declares יהוה: I shall put **My Torah** in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts. And I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.*

So what is this thing called Torah, that YHWH is going to put in their inward parts, and that He will write on their hearts ?

One purpose of my study, is to provide you with a working definition of the term, "Torah", that will serve as a sound and functional foundation upon which all the other studies will build.

Glenn McWilliams in his CD teaching “Torah and the Image of YHWH”, explains that there is at present, a lack of uniformity in the Messianic movement on some issues. I described this previously in my study, **How do Our Beliefs Systems Work**, by saying that, there are relatively few doctrines and facts from the Bible, about which we can be absolutely certain (and generally agree on). To illustrate this further, I’d like to quote just one verse from the book of Genesis.

Gen 1:1 tells us :

In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth

We can be “absolutely certain” from studying this verse that :

+ “In the beginning”, Elohim created the heavens and the earth.

We “can’t be” absolutely certain, from studying just this verse :

- + when the beginning was !
- + exactly who or what Elohim is !
- + what are the “heavens” ?
- + what the “earth” is ?

In order to understand this verse, we must “interpret” it – we must give possible explanations, which I call “theories”, of what individual words or phrases, could mean. When we do that, it is possible and probable, that we can have different understandings of what this verse really telling us. This problem exists for many things written in YHWH’s word, the Bible.

While there is not agreement with theories such as those above, there is quite a lot of freedom within the Messianic Israelite movement in many areas. For example, we are commanded to wear tzitzits (fringes) with a blue thread, (**Num 15:38**), but we are not told how they must be tied, and so each person or group has the freedom to create their own tying “tradition”. There are many other freedoms of this type within the Messianic Israelite movement.

What is Torah ?

There are quite a few opinions about this concept depending on a person or group’s previous background.

I’d like to summarise as many of these opinions as I can, so that we can see the overall picture. At this point, I wish to point out, that I am just presenting this as information – I am not commenting on its accuracy, except where I will make some special comment.

1 Jewish people who have come to a belief in Yahushua as the Messiah, often have had a previous belief in two Torahs. They have believed in :

- (a) a **Written Torah** which they say consists of the first five books of the Tanach which were written by Moses. Evidence to support this is given in :

Ex 24:4

And Mosheh wrote down all the Words of יהוה

There are several scripture verses that show that Moses was the scribe who recorded many things including Num 32:2, Deut 31:9 & 22, Mk 12:19, Lk 24:27 and Jn 5:46.

- (b) an **Oral Torah** – which the Jews say was given to Moses, who gave it to Aaron, Joshua and the Elders, and so on, down through the generations.

They say that Moses was given the complete Torah by “Adonai”. He wrote down the “written” Torah, but they say that a seed was planted in Moses which was an expansion of the Written Torah, which is called the Oral Torah (although it has since been written down). Many, many

commands have been added to the written Torah by the rabbis. The Rabbinic Jews give their Oral Torah great authority, often making it more important than the written Torah.

Comment

Much of the controversy between Yahushua and the Pharisees and Torah teachers is about the Oral Torah, and is never about the Written Torah. The following expressions all have to do with the Oral Torah.

In **Matt 15:9**, Yahushua talks about the “**commands of men**”
*But in vain do they worship Me, **teaching as teachings the commands of men.***

The following verses all talk about the “**leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees**”

Matt 16:6

*And יהושע (Yahushua) said to them, “Mind! And beware of **the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees***

Matt 16:12

*Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the **leaven of bread**, but of **the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees***

Mar 8:15

*And He was warning them, saying, “Mind! Beware of **the leaven of the Pharisees***

Luke 12:1

*He began to say to His taught ones, first, “Beware of **the leaven of the Pharisees**, which is hypocrisy.*

The Gospel writers, Matthew and Mark quote Yahushua who is talking about “**the tradition of the elders**” :

Matt 15:2

*“Why do Your taught ones transgress **the tradition of the elders**? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread*

Mark 7:3

*For the Pharisees, and all the Yehudim (Jews), do not eat unless they wash their hands thoroughly, holding fast **the tradition of the elders***

Mark 7:5

*Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, “Why do Your taught ones not walk according to **the tradition of the elders**, but eat bread with unwashed hands*

In **Matt 16:11-12**, Yahushua explains that there is a difference between YHWH’s Torah and the Oral Torah.

11 “How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread, but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?”

12 Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

The Oral Torah was “supposed” to be carefully and accurately passed from one generation to the next. Around 200 CE, it was codified into the Mishnah – a systematised collection of Oral and Written Torah. The Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmud which contain Gemara – commentaries shaped by modern day rabbinic Judaism.

Description of the meaning of “Torah” continued from page 3 :

- 2 Not all Jews believe this. **The Karaite Jews only follow the written Torah – they follow the Tanach.** For them, this is their only authority, and so it is their Torah.
- 3 Other groups limit the Torah further, saying that **the covenant received on Mt Sinai is all they obey** – they only do what they claim, the Israelites agreed to do at Mt Sinai. They refer to Exodus 19:1 to Num 10:12 as their Torah, using the statement in Exodus 19:8 as their reference.

Ex 19:8

And all the people answered together and said, "All that יהוה has spoken we shall do."

- 4 For still others from the Christian Church – **the Torah has been divided into the ritual and moral laws.** These people determine which laws are the moral laws, and which are the ritual laws. They have been taught (and have believed without checking), that the ritual laws have been done away with. They perceive that with the coming of Messiah, and the destruction of the Temple, they no longer need to keep them.

A sub-group of these say that **the Torah is simply the Ten Commandments alone.** They say that all the laws have either been done away with, or they are contained within the Ten Commandments – that is, those which were written on the tablets which Moses carried down the mountain. The Catholic Church (and others) has changed some of these.

- 5 There are still others who say **the whole Bible (Old and New Testaments) is Torah.** They use **2 Tim 3:16** which says:

*16 All Scripture is breathed by Elohim and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for setting straight, for instruction in righteousness,
17 that the man of Elohim might be fitted, equipped for every good work.*

What they don't understand, is that the "Scripture" Paul is quoting here, is most likely "the Torah" (first five books of the Tanach), but certainly the Tanach. It was the only "Scripture" they had at that time. The "New Testament" Scriptures didn't exist at this time.

So there is confusion about what Torah is.

The word "Torah" doesn't appear in most translations. Torah is a Hebrew word. So what English word is used to translate the Hebrew word "torah" ? Most translators chose "**law**" for "**torah**", but we need to be aware that there are several other Hebrew words also translated as "law".

There are 5 words that are translated as "law" in the Tanach.

In **Gen 47:26**, we find the word "law"

*And Yosēph made it a **law** over the land of Mitsrayim to this day, that Pharaoh should have one-fifth, except for the ground of the priests only, which did not become Pharaoh's.*

The word "law" in this verse is Strong's word # 2709 (Hebrew – choq). It means an enactment.

In **Deut 33:2**, the word law also appears

*And he said, "יהוה came from Sinai, and rose from Sēir for them. He shone forth from Mount Paran, and came with ten thousands of set-apart ones – at His right hand a **law** of fire for them*

The word "law" in this verse is Strong's word # 1881 (Hebrew – dath). It means a royal edict.

In **Lev 24:22**, we find another example of the word law

'You are to have one right-ruling (law), for the stranger and for the native, for I am יהוה your Elohim.'

This word "law" in this verse is Strong's word # 4941 (Hebrew – mishpat). Here it means a verdict.

Jer 32:11 also mentions the word law

"Then I took the deed of purchase – that which was sealed according to the custom and law, and that which was open

The word "law" here is Strong's word # 4687 (Hebrew – mistzah). Here it means a command.

Exodus 24:12 says :

And יהוה said to Mosheh, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there, while I give you tablets of stone, and the law (torah) and commandments which I have written, to teach (# 3384-yarah) them.

The word "law" here is Strong's word # 8451 (Hebrew – torah). Here it means a precept, but this word "torah" comes from Strong's word # 3384, and has a root meaning (Hebrew – yarah) "to throw, to cast, to point out, to instruct, to teach". Note that in this same verse the word "teach" (# 3384) appears also.

With this new understanding, **Exodus 24:12** should read :

And YHWH said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there, while I give you tablets of stone, and **teachings** and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."

Torah is the instructions or teachings of YHWH, that we are to yarah (teach) to the children of Israel.

Torah is therefore not "law", but teaching, instruction and even revelation !

Torah contains statutes and laws and ordinances and commandments and judgments, but is not exclusively "law".

Explanation of these terms

Statutes are to be observed. They are enactments or appointments of events such as YHWH's feasts.

Laws are to be kept. They are precepts or directions given as rules to follow. An example would be "Remember the Sabbath" (Ex 20:8).

Ordinances also are to be kept. They include various customs. An example would be "eating the Passover lamb that has been roasted" (Ex 12:8).

A **Commandment** is something that has been ordered to do. An example would be : "You do not murder" (Ex 20:13).

Judgments are verdicts or sentences. An good example is given in **Exod 12:15**

For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that being shall be cut off from Yisra'el.

So it is very easy to see that the word “law” is not an appropriate translation for the word “Torah”.

Since we now know that Torah means “teaching and instruction”, perhaps we should ask the question **“why did YHWH give us His Torah ?”**

Paul has an answer in **Rom 8:2** where he says :

For the Torah of the Spirit of the life in Messiah יהושע has set me free from the law of sin and of death

Mark Ensign, a lawyer, writes in his paper “The Torah is not the Law” about this. He starts with **Lev 26:13**, which tells us :

I am יהוה your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim, from being their slaves. And I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk upright.

Ensign says, “Because YHWH delivered His people from slavery, He gave them a Torah of deliverance- instructions about living in the new liberty.” He continues, “now in these last days, YHWH wants us to be delivered, to be liberated, to fully understand and embrace what has been hidden from us for centuries and generations, so we may be truly free in Him and in His Torah that brings life in Him”.

Ensign gives his definition of Torah. He says **“The Torah is a set of instructions, graciously offered by our loving heavenly Father for our own good, about how we are to walk humbly before Him, and with our fellow men”.**

Glenn McWilliams in his CD, “Torah and the Image of God” offers a slightly different insight. I’d like to paraphrase much of what he says about Torah.

McWilliams says if we know Torah is teaching and instruction, we should ask these questions:

What are the teaching and instructions for ?
What are these teachings and instructions, teaching us ?
What are we being asked to learn and do ?

To answer these questions, we must look at the unique calling that the children of Israel are being asked to do, and to do this we must return to the beginning – to the Book of Genesis.

One of the truths we must come to, is that **we cannot fully comprehend YHWH.**

We can’t see Him – **Gen 3:8** says that Adam and Eve “heard” the voice of YHWH
Deut 4:12 declares this too – “you heard His voice”

YHWH is not a man ! **Num 23:19, 1 Sam 15:29 Job 9:32**

YHWH is a spirit. **John 4:24; John 6:46**

With all this said, it is still YHWH’s will to be known by His creation – this is why YHWH created man in His own image.

Gen 1:26-27 tells us :

26 And Elohim said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the livestock, and over all the earth and over all the creeping creatures that creep on the earth.”

27 And Elohim created the man in His image, in the image of Elohim He created him – male and female He created them

So man was created to be the image of YHWH – this was the purpose for his creation. Adam was to be the expressed or manifest presence (image) of YHWH on the Earth. YHWH therefore, gave Adam dominion over the earth.

YHWH has no physical body – **John 4:24** tells us He is spirit.

Man's likeness was therefore to be in the manner in which he was to live, not in the way he looked.

YHWH is eternal. This means, He is not limited in any way. There is no time or space where YHWH is not present.

While YHWH is present in a Temple, a body, a burning bush, a cloud – He is also present everywhere else at the same time. He can manifest in any way, but He not limited to, or contained by any of them.

The language of scripture is anthro-po-morphic (to have human form).

Man was made in YHWH's image and likeness, but when we talk about Him, we make YHWH out to be in OUR image.

This is so in order that we better communicate who and what YHWH is, and how we are to relate to Him.

The scriptures often describe YHWH in human terms. He is described as having ears, feet, mouth, arms, hand, and so on. The following scriptures explain this idea :

Ex 24:10 (His feet); **Ex 9:3** (hand of YHWH); **Deut 26:8** (mighty hand and outstretched arm); **Gen 6:8** (eyes of YHWH); **Ex 15:8** (blast of His nostrils); **Deut 8:3** (mouth of YHWH); **Num 11:18** (Ears of YHWH)

YHWH doesn't have any of these things. He is not limited with them !

So how is man to know and relate to YHWH if we can't see Him ?

We know that man is made of body, soul and spirit.

(Please consult Job 32:8 for "spirit", which is Strong's word # 7307 and Gen 49:6 for "soul", which is Strong's word # 5315, for more information).

Body is that part of man that relates to the world around man – this is the sensual part of man. **Soul** is the intellect, emotions, personality and the will of a person. **Spirit** is that part of man, that communes with the spirit of YHWH, and gains revelation knowledge from the Creator.

Let's look to see how these three parts interact within man, and with YHWH.

Adam, prior to the fall was a perfect being – he lived for a while in YHWH's perfectly created order. Adam communed with YHWH in his spirit – the spirit of YHWH spoke into the spirit of Adam, imparting to him all necessary knowledge, understanding, revelation and wisdom.

The spirit of Adam informed his soul how to think and feel about things around him – the soul of Adam informed his body how to interact with the world around him. **This is the perfectly created order of man.** In this order, man would know and commune with YHWH, with and through the spirit. By living in such spiritual communion with the Creator, man becomes the embodiment of the revelation of YHWH. So man would be the physical embodiment of the spiritual revelation of who, and what YHWH is, and wills.

But YHWH not only wanted man to know Him but also to love Him, and for love to truly be love, it must be freely given.

For love to be freely given, there must be a choice. Man must be free to “choose” to give his love, or to withhold it ! Let’s look at the story of the two trees in the garden of Eden.

Gen 2:9 describes them :

And out of the ground יהוה Elohim made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, with the tree of life in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen 2:16-17 continues

16 And יהוה Elohim commanded the man, saying, “Eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it you shall certainly die.”

These two trees, **the tree of life**, and the tree of good and evil, represent two different ways of living in relationship with YHWH and the world. The tree of life represents the way of the spirit – in this way man chooses to live in communion with the spirit of YHWH – submitting to his Creator. YHWH would be Elohim and man would be servant. In this kind of relationship, man is dependent on the Creator for all necessary knowledge, understanding and wisdom, to fulfill his purpose as the image of YHWH, and to cultivate the garden. By choosing the tree of life, man would live by revelation knowledge, and be the manifested image of YHWH in the world.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents man living by his own senses and reason. In this way of living, man effectually reverses the order of YHWH. Now man’s senses become his master. We should note the serpent’s promise in **Gen 3:5** :

*“For Elohim knows that in the day you eat of it **your eyes shall be opened**, and you shall be like Elohim, knowing good and evil.”*

We should also note the effect of Adam and Eve’s decision.

Gen 3:7 explains it :

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made loin coverings for themselves.

Eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil appeared to have great freedom – man would live based on what his senses told him – the senses would tell his soul “this tastes good”, and so on. The body is now telling the soul how to think and feel about things. In this way of living, the spirit is little needed. It begins to atrophy, to waste away. Man can now, based on his sensual knowledge, reason for himself, about what is good and what is evil ?

This is the choice that stood before Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It wasn’t meant to be a temptation, or test, or an opportunity for failure. The two trees were meant to be a choice or opportunity for them to express their love for the Creator. Every time they passed by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and didn’t eat of its fruit, they expressed their desire to remain in communion with YHWH, and to carry out His purpose and will. They agreed to be the manifest image of YHWH in the world. Nothing shows love like (willing) obedience. Even Yahushua taught “**if you love me, keep my commandments**”, **John 14:15,14:21, 14:23**.

These two trees provided man with a choice – to love YHWH or to be free from YHWH. The outcome of this choice would have incredible consequences. YHWH told Adam “**that in the day that you eateth thereof, thou shall surely die**”. Death here represents the death of Adam as the image of YHWH. As soon as Adam made this choice, his very nature and image changed ! No more was Adam manifesting the revealed will of YHWH, or the revelation knowledge of YHWH. Adam was manifesting his own thoughts, his own feelings, and knowledge based on his sensual contact with the world.

Over time, man loses his ability, and perhaps even his desire to commune with the spirit of the Creator. Instead, men fulfill the serpent's promise to be like gods themselves ! These attempts are always futile and counter-productive to YHWH's purpose for His creation.

Gen 3:17-19 reads :

*17 And to the man He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'Do not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground because of you, in toil you are to eat of it all the days of your life,
18 and the ground shall bring forth thorns and thistles for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field.
19 "By the sweat of your face you are to eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are, and to dust you return*

Note that YHWH didn't curse the land – Adam did. Adam would now have to learn to tend the garden by trial and error (since he had lost YHWH's revealed knowledge). Adam would make choices based on what appeared to be good or evil, himself. With every wrong choice, creation would be corrupted and polluted. Weeds and death would spring forth from Adam's sinful choice.

The rest of Genesis is about the death of YHWH's created order, the death of the Garden of Eden, the death of the image of YHWH, and the death of the previous relationship with YHWH. **Genesis 5:3** makes it clear :

*And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and brought forth a son in his own likeness, **after his image**, and called his name Shēth.*

Adam's son was in "his" image, not that of YHWH. The rest of the story of the Bible is about man being alienated from his Creator, and the Creator's efforts to restore him to the original idea of creation.

Over time, man becomes more estranged from the one true Elohim. As this estrangement continues, the original image of YHWH becomes more corrupted, tarnished and distorted. This then leads to confusion and rampant idolatry, paganism, immorality, perversity and to such stories as the Flood, the tower of Babel, and ultimately the giving of the Torah at Mt Sinai.

What is the Torah ?

Glenn McWilliams says the Torah is the self-revelation of YHWH in written form. It is the description of who and what YHWH is; it is the image of YHWH made sensual. The children of Israel were given the sensual means of knowing who YHWH is.

Torah is the teachings and loving instructions in how to live a righteous life. It is the revelation of YHWH's will and character. It is the image of YHWH.

The written Torah, **the Tanach/OT and the Apostolic Writings/NT**, is the means by which the children of Israel will come to know their Elohim. The rest of the world shall come to know YHWH by witnessing Israel living out YHWH's Torah. By living the Torah, the image of YHWH is made manifest in the world.

At Mt Sinai, YHWH invites Israel to enter into a very special relationship with Himself (**Ex 19:5-6**). In **Ex 19:8** Israel responded by saying "yes".

Israel would become a kingdom of priests to witness to the world. A priest is an intermediary between YHWH and the people, and between the people and YHWH.

By faithfully living out the statutes, ordinances, teachings, rituals, commandments, judgments, laws of the Torah, (here "Torah" means the first five Books of the Tanach), the children of Israel would embody in their lives, the living image of YHWH.

By faithfully living the Torah, the self-revelation of YHWH, the rest of the world would see who, and what the Elohim of Israel is.

The world can see that YHWH is set-apart, compassionate, just, merciful, forgiving, righteous, powerful, generous, loving, and most of all, alive !

We are to be the visible presence of the invisible Elohim.

By living the Torah, we can restore the image of YHWH which had become corrupted and distorted over the ages; we also make manifest the righteousness, set-apartness, justice, mercy, and grace of YHWH by keeping Torah.

The **Torah** describes **the covenant between YHWH and His people** in the terms of a marriage. The Book of Exodus is the unfolding of a beautiful love story between YHWH and Israel.

The Torah gives us instructions about how to live our lives, and instructions on how to live the image of YHWH. **These instructions are written in the first five books of the Tanach.** It is regrettable that so many have turned YHWH's Torah into a restrictive list of do's and don'ts, or worse yet, they have turned the Torah into a curse, to be avoided at all costs.

Rabbi Ed Nydle says the Torah is the blueprint of Creation.

If we are to live the Torah faithfully, there must be a change in our nature. While we may keep the letter of the written Torah in the strength of our flesh, it will be a continual struggle, while we are in our flesh. Paul called this being **"under the law"**.

In this state, the Torah is written on stone – it is outside of us and imposed upon us. So we keep the Torah imperfectly by means of the flesh.

Only Yahushua has the power to change the nature of a tree or a person. We need to be "born again", as **John 3:3** and several other verses tells us.

Jer 31:31-33 says :

31 "See, the days are coming," declares יהוה, "when I shall make a new covenant with the house of Yisra'el and with the house of Yehudah¹, Footnote: ¹See Heb. 8:8-12, Heb. 10:16-17.

32 not like the covenant I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Mitsrayim, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them," declares יהוה.

*33 "For this is the covenant I shall make with the house of Yisra'el after those days, declares יהוה: **I shall put My Torah in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts. And I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.***

We should note :

- + the so-called first covenant refers to the covenant given to the Israelites at Mt Sinai.
- + the re-newed or second covenant is the covenant mentioned in Jer 31:31-33, and quoted in Heb 8:10.
- + that the first and re-newed covenant/second covenants are exactly the same in content, and
- + the only difference is the location. The first covent was written on stone, the re-newed covenant will be written on our hearts.

Those who have been "born again", those who have YHWH's Torah written on their hearts, are no longer "under the law".

Gal 3:24-25 explains it this way :

Therefore the Torah became our trainer unto Messiah, in order to be declared right by belief. And after belief has come, we are no longer under a trainer

Here is an analogy that might explain it more clearly.

A concert pianist takes the score of music, places it on the stand and begins to play. At first she plays methodically, technically; she is bound to the notes written on the paper before her; again and again she rehearses the music carefully following every note.

After months of practice, someone opens the door and the music is blown off the stand, but the pianist just keeps playing. She is no longer bound to the written score, now the music is written in her heart; it is in her heart and hands and mind – it is now part of who she is; no longer is she playing methodically and technically; she is interpreting the music, it is flowing from within her, from her life and her body.

This is what Paul is teaching about the Torah !

When we come to the Torah, YHWH's loving instructions, in ignorance, we may keep it because our parents, rabbi, Sunday school teacher, priest, or minister said we should. So we read the external word written on a scroll, a tablet, a book, and we do what we read; This is being **“under the law”**.

When faith comes, we are no longer **“under the law”**. When faith (a living relationship with the living Elohim) comes, the Ruach fills our heart.

When we :

- + understand the wisdom and purpose of keeping Torah, it is easy to keep,
- + realize that by keeping Torah, we demonstrate our love for Yahushua,
- + realize that by keeping Torah, we embody YHWH in the world,

then suddenly we are keeping the Torah out of love for YHWH. No one has to tell us to do it; it is in our hearts to do it. No longer are we keeping the Torah technically and methodically - we are living Torah – it flows from our heart. No longer do we need the schoolmaster for we have the spirit of Yahushua living within us.

Paul is telling us, that we no longer are keeping Torah from an external motivation (something imposed upon us from the outside); it is no longer a source of warring and affliction to our sensual nature. Rather Messiah Yahushua has quickened our spirit so that our re-awakened spirit can again commune with YHWH - the Ruach has written the Torah on our hearts. **The Torah is now a joy and a delight to us.**

So it is that we are being restored to the image of YHWH. Now keeping Torah is “natural” for us – it is our created purpose. To “not keep” Torah now seems to us to be an un-natural affliction ! This is why we grieve the destruction of the Temple, and the exile from the land. By being in exile and without the temple, we are prevented from embodying the whole image of YHWH – we missing part of the revealed image of YHWH.

When the Ruach writes the Torah on our hearts, we are indeed **“born again”**. We put off the earthly image and put on the heavenly image. We no longer live by the letter of the law but the spirit of the law, or as Paul said, “the spirit of Messiah is within you”.

By faith in Yahushua, we put off our old carnal nature, and put on Messiah. We become members of the body of Yahushua;

In **Matt 5:17** Yahushua tells us :

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to complete

Yahushua came to **embody** the Torah, to give it life, meaning and substance.

By doing this, He became the manifest image of YHWH. Paul declared this of Him in **Col 1:15**

Who (Messiah) is the likeness of the invisible Elohim, the first-born of all creation

If we are going to fulfill our purpose, **we must keep Torah** ! The Torah becomes the instructions for being the image of YHWH. What then is Torah ? **Torah** is the living image of YHWH embodied in the members of Messiah's body, as conformed in the written Word. If we are truly members of Yahushua's body, we too like Him, have come not to destroy the Torah, but to fulfill it, and give it substance.

For **John 14:15** says :

if you love Me, keep My commandments.

When we truly love someone, we desire to see her/him in our lives; to be in their presence and bask in their glow.

By keeping the Torah, the body of Yahushua becomes evident in our world. We witness the image of YHWH in our lives; we remove the stumbling blocks to fellowship with our Creator, Redeemer, Saviour, and Elohim.

By removing parts of the Torah, **the Church has removed pieces of the self-revelation of YHWH**. They have changed the image of YHWH, and they have desecrated the image of YHWH.

When we change YHWH's image into a false image - **this is idolatry** - the worship of false images.

The Church has violated the Torah's commandment not to add to, or take away from the Torah. **Deut 4:2** commands us :

Do not add to the Word which I command you, and do not take away from it¹, so as to guard the commands of יהוה your Elohim which I am commanding you.

When the Church began removing parts of the Torah, pagan practices filled the void !

The Church :

- + changed the Sabbath from YHWH's set-apart seventh day to the first day – Sunday, the venerable day of the sun god.
- + changed the ritual laws and appointed days, and replaced them with the pagan holidays of Lent, Ishtah and Christmas.

How did this happen ? By changing the Torah, they changed the image of YHWH; by changing the image, they worship a false image; so they worship their pagan image with pagan practices.

The Church, in error, teaches that the Jews say, that they are saved by keeping the Torah. **This teaching only exists in the Church** ! It certainly isn't the teaching of Messianic Israel ! **Keeping Torah is not about being saved – it is about loving YHWH.**

We don't keep Torah because we are afraid of going to hell, nor do we keep it because it will earn us heaven. We keep it because we love YHWH and Yahushua, our Messiah – it has been written in our hearts to do so – we have been created and called to do so. It is our worship of the one true Elohim. It is through our keeping of Torah that others will come to know YHWH. He is the only one who can save them.

Let's look at **Matthew 5:17** again.

This verse, quoted above and repeated here, is often mis-quoted as proof that the Torah has been done away with.

It reads :

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah (Law) or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

They say that “Jesus” fulfilled the law, and that we no longer need to do it all. – it has been done away with”. All we need to do is keep the Ten Commandments. This is a typical example of people reading “just the one verse”, and not checking the original meanings of the words.

This is quite an in-depth verse, so let’s take it one piece at a time. It starts off with, “**do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets**”. It never ceases to amaze me, that people miss the first part of this verse. Christians are all too keen to tell you, “that’s all been done away with”. What they don’t see, is that Yahushua in this verse, is giving us a command “**do not think**”, yet most of the Church overlooks this, and continues to “think”.

The next word I want to examine is “destroy”. This is Strong’s Word # 2647, **kataluo**, and means to disintegrate or demolish.

When talking about the Law (Torah), Yahushua is talking about the first five books of the Bible, and when He talks about the Prophets, He is talking about the writings of the Prophets – in others words, He is talking about the whole of the Tanach.

Let me focus on the correct meaning of “fulfill” for a moment. If you look in the Greek, you will find the word “fulfill” is Strong’s number G4137, **pleroo**. You can read the full details in Strong’s Concordance, but for now, I’ll give you the summary.

Pleroo means “to make full, to fill up, to make complete, to execute an office, to verify a prophesy, to perfect, to fully preach and to teach, to accomplish, and to establish”.

If you look through the Apostolic Writings, the New Testament, you will find the word “fill” on three occasions. On careful examination, you will find that “fill” is the same word as “fulfill”, **pleroo**. To show that “fulfill” has been incorrectly translated, let’s look at **Matt 3:15**. It reads :

But יהושע answering, said to him, “Permit it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him

If we use the same logic as is often used in Mat 5:17, they would say this verse means that Yahushua has “done away” with righteousness.

If we look at **Phil 2:1-2**, it reads :

*1 If, then, there is any encouragement in Messiah, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of Spirit, if any affection and compassion,
2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, having the same love, one in being and of purpose*

The word “complete” is the same Greek word **pleroo**. If we again use the previous interpretation, verse 2 would read : “if any affection or compassion, do away with my joy, being of one mind”.

To emphasise this again, the word **pleroo**, would mean “to complete, to make my joy full, fill it to its fullness, being of one mind, one love, one being, one purpose”.

With this new understanding, **Matt 5:17** should read :

*Do not think that I have come to **demolish** the Torah or the Prophets. I do not come to **demolish** but to fully preach and teach it”.*

The other thing that people do, is they just read the verse they are interested in. It is very important to read verses both before and after the one selected, so that the context is fully understood. That, together with checking the original language, can remove many of the translation problems.

If you look at **Matt 5:18**, you will see what I mean.

“For truly, I say to you, till the heaven and the earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall by no means pass from the Torah till all be done

If you read Matt 5:17 and 18 together, it is very hard to see how people can “mis-interpret” what Yahushua is really saying.

Because people read the Bible from a prejudice view, they put **their own** interpretation on it. The bottom line is, that YHWH's Word never contradicts itself. If there is an “appeared” contraction, you can be assured that it is a “translation” problem !

Other Scripture verses that support the idea that the Torah has not been done away with are :

Luke 16:17

“And it is easier for the heaven and the earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Torah to fall

Heb 8:10

“Because this is the covenant that I shall make with the house of Yisra'el after those days, says יהוה', giving My laws in their mind, and I shall write them on their hearts, and I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people

Heb 10:16-17

*17 “This is the covenant that I shall make with them after those days, says יהוה', giving My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I shall write them
18 and, “Their sins and their lawlessnesses I shall remember no more.*

What should we do now ?

Now that we realize that we are commanded to keep all YHWH's Torah, we need to make a start. I have read there are 613 commands in the Tanach and over 1050 in the Apostolic Writings, but not all of them apply to every person. Some are only for men, and some only for women. Some are for priests; some are for sacrifices. **We can only do those commands that we can do** ! We can only operate with the revelation YHWH has given us.

We are all familiar with the Ten Commandments, so we certainly can continue with those. We have learned about Sabbath, so we can continue with it.

Let's have a look at what happened with the first century new believers.

Acts 15:1-29 describes the events of the Jerusalem Council. This council of the Messianic leaders had met because there was disagreement about what new believers should be expected to do. (Read **Acts 15:1-29**).

Acts 15:20 describes the minimum requirements :

*but that we write to them (new believers in Yahushua, the Messiah) **to abstain from the defilements of idols, and from whoring, and from what is strangled, and from blood***

The new believers were required to initially keep these four, so-called Noahide laws. Verse 21 tells us that they were **also** expected to attend synagogue each Sabbath, and learn the rest of Torah.

Acts 15:21 explains this :

“For from ancient generations Mosheh has, in every city, those proclaiming him – being read in the congregations every Sabbath.”

Many people mis-interpret **Acts 15:20**, believing that the new believers only had to do those four things. **Acts 15:21** is really saying that they needed to attend the synagogue each Sabbath, and there, over time, they would learn all the rest of YHWH's Torah. Even though some of us do not have congregations, we need to do the same. **We should do all we can to learn more and more of YHWH's Truth – His Torah.**

In **Deut 6:25**, we find Moses speaking about “righteousness”, to all of Israel saying :

*Then it will be **righteousness** for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before Yahweh our Elohim, as He has commanded us.'*

This verse is telling us that **in order to be righteous, we must keep all of YHWH's Torah.**



Summary of the Key Points

- + There is a variety of definitions of what people consider Torah to be.
- + **Torah** is the instructions and teachings of a loving Elohim, who wants to guide His people, so that they can have a wonderful relationship with Him, and with all other people.
- + We must be very careful not to confuse **any tradition of man** with the written Torah of YHWH.
- + Man was created in the image and likeness of YHWH. Because YHWH is spirit, man's likeness was to be in the manner in which he was to live, not in the way he looked.
- + Through the sin of Adam, this image was changed from being like YHWH, to living by man's senses. Man's relationship with YHWH was changed through this sin.
- + **Torah** is the self-revelation of YHWH.
- + **Torah** is YHWH's way of re-establishing His original relationship with man.
- + The Torah was given to the children of Israel at Mt Sinai.
- + The children of Israel broke YHWH's Torah covenant.
- + YHWH re-newed the Sinai covenant – it is described in **Jer 31:31-33**
- + Yahushua the Messiah, came to fully preach and teach Torah.
- + When we receive Yahushua as our Master and Saviour, and we receive the Ruach. The Ruach writes YHWH's Torah on our hearts. We “get to” do YHWH's Torah because that is the only way we can show Him, we love Him. Doing YHWH's Torah then becomes a joy and a delight.
- + Many people mis-interpret **Matt 5:17**, by not reading it in conjunction with verse 18, and by not checking the Greek meaning of the words “destroy” and “fulfill”.
- + The Torah has definitely, not been done away with.
- + We know that the Torah is Spiritual (**Rom 7:14**).
- + **Righteousness** is the keeping of all YHWH's Torah.
- + As beginning believers, it is necessary to keep all the parts of Torah we have revelation about, as well as studying YHWH's word, so that we can learn to keep the whole of Torah, as it applied to each person.
- + Remember, **John 1:14** tells us that Yahushua is the living Torah.

And the Word became flesh and pitched His tent¹ among us, and we saw His esteem, esteem as of an only brought-forth of a father, complete in favour and truth

- + It is very important to read surrounding verses when studying any topic, so that the “context” is clear. It is also a very good idea to check the original meaning of words and not rely on the “translated” meaning.

As usual, I encourage you to test what I have written. From my study, I believe the information I have provided is correct. I never ever want to be deceived, and so, if I have made mistakes, please point them out, describing your scriptural references. I pray that this study, with lots of help from Glenn McWilliams, Rabbi Ed Nydle, and Mark Ensign, has been a blessing to you.

Blessings and Shalom

Peter Guiren 20 Aug 2009

Appendix A

4137 plhro,w pleroo {play-ro'-o}

Meaning: 1) to make full, to fill up, i.e. to fill to the full 1a) to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally 1a1) I abound, I am liberally supplied 2) to render full, i.e. to complete 2a) to fill to the top: so that nothing shall be wanting to full measure, fill to the brim 2b) to consummate: a number 2b1) to make complete in every particular, to render perfect 2b2) to carry through to the end, to accomplish, carry out, (some undertaking) 2c) to carry into effect, bring to realisation, realise 2c1) of matters of duty: to perform, execute 2c2) of sayings, promises, prophecies, to bring to pass, ratify, accomplish 2c3) to fulfil, i.e. to cause God's will (as made known in the law) to be obeyed as it should be, and God's promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfilment

Origin: from 4134; TDNT - 6:286,867; v

Usage: AV - fulfil 51, fill 19, be full 7, complete 2, end 2, misc 9; 90

Matthew Henry Notes on Matt 5, Verses: 17-20

“Those to whom Christ preached, and for whose use he gave these instructions to his disciples, were such as in their religion had an eye, 1. To the *scriptures* of the *Old Testament* as their rule, and therein Christ here shows them they were in the right: 2. To the scribes and the Pharisees as their *example*, and therein Christ here shows them they were in the wrong; for,

I. The rule which Christ came to establish exactly agreed with the scriptures of the Old Testament, here called *the law* and *the prophets*. The *prophets* were commentators upon the law, and both together made up that rule of faith and practice which Christ found upon the throne in the Jewish church, and here he keeps it on the throne.

1. He protests against the thought of cancelling and weakening the *Old Testament*; *Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets.* (1.) "Let not the pious Jews, who have an affection for the *law and the prophets*, *fear* that I come to *destroy* them." Let them be not prejudiced against Christ and his doctrine, from a jealousy that this kingdom he came to set up, would derogate from the honour of the scriptures, which they had embraced as coming from God, and of which they had experienced the power and purity; no, let them be satisfied that Christ has no ill design upon the law and the prophets. "Let not the profane Jews, who have a disaffection to the law and the prophets, and are weary of that yoke, hope that I am come to destroy them." Let not carnal libertines imagine that the Messiah is come to discharge them from the obligation of divine precepts and yet to secure to them divine promises, to make the happy and yet to give them leave to live as they list. Christ commands nothing now which was forbidden either by the law of nature or the moral law, nor forbids any thing which those laws had enjoined; it is a great mistake to think he does, and he here takes care to rectify the mistake; *I am not come to destroy*. The Saviour of souls is the *destroyer* of nothing but the *works of the devil*, of nothing that comes from God, much less of those excellent dictates which we have from Moses and the prophets. No, he came to *fulfil* them. That is, {1.} To obey the commands of the law, for he was *made under the law*, Gal. 4:4. He in all respects yielded obedience to the law, honoured his parents, sanctified the sabbath, prayed, gave alms, and did that which never any one else did, obeyed perfectly, and never broke the law in any thing. {2.} To make good the promises of the law, and the predictions of the prophets, which did all bear witness to him. The covenant of grace is, for substance, the same now that it was then, and Christ the Mediator of it. {3.} To answer the types of the law; thus (as bishop Tillotson expresses it), he did not make *void*, but make *good*, the ceremonial law, and manifested himself to be the Substance of all those shadows. {4.} To fill up the defects of it, and so to complete and perfect it. Thus the word *plerosai* properly signifies. If we consider the law as a vessel that had some water in it before, he did not come to pour out the water, but to fill the vessel up to the brim; or, as a picture that is first rough-drawn, displays some outlines only of the piece intended, which are afterwards filled up; so Christ made an improvement of the law and the prophets by his additions and explications."

