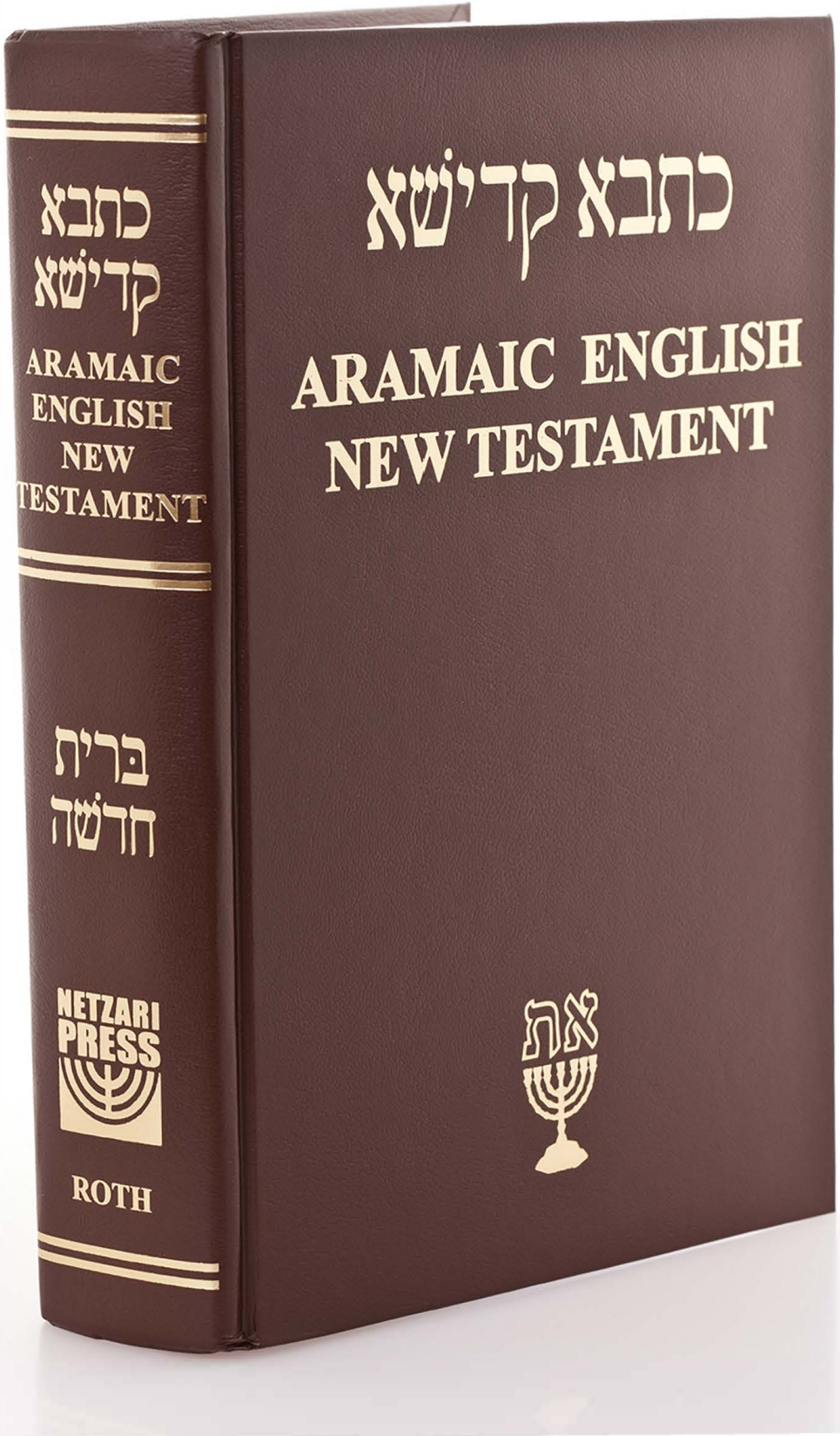
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ARAMAIC ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT

ברית חדשה

Fifth Edition

MARI

PESHITTA ENGLISH ARAMAIC CRITICAL EDITION

A COMPILATION, ANNOTATION AND TRANSLATION OF THE EASTERN ORIGINAL ARAMAIC NEW TESTAMENT PESHITTA TEXT

Compiled, Edited & Translated with consultation to both
Ancient and Modern Authorities including:
The Khabouris Codex and the 1905 Critical Edition of the
Syriac New Testament by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Keyed and annotated with Tiberian-Masoretic vowel pointing system to restore the sound of Y'shua's Eastern Aramaic dialect for the Modern Hebrew reader.

Andrew Gabriel-Yitzkhak bar Raphael
Andrew Gabriel Roth

NETZARI PRESS

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About the subtitle, ***MARI*** is the Aramaic word for "my master", a title consistently given to Y'shua by his followers. When Thomas saw the risen Savior in John's Gospel, for example, he dropped to his knees and declared "Mari w'Alahi", or "My Master and my Elohim."

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את

Alef Tav

"Alef" is the first and "Tav" is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Just like the English phrase "from A to Z" suggests a full spectrum of thought, Alef-Tav does the same thing in Hebrew and Aramaic. This must especially be borne in the mind because it appears inside the creative act and affirms YHWH's authorship of creation as "the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End".

In English characters the key phrase is ***et*** hashamayim v'***et*** ha'aretz and could literally be thought of in total as "In the beginning, Elohim sent creation to the heavens and the earth". Alef Tav is "the energy force" behind Creation Who reveals Himself in the name of YHWH.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃

In the beginning, Elohim created the heavens and the earth

וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם׃

And the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the waters.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר׃

And Elohim said, "Let there be light" and there was light.

Genesis (B'resheet) 1:1-3

Within these first three lines Torah reveals wonderfully deep elements of Mashiyach, that are far beyond coincidence. The very first word בְּרֵאשִׁית (b'resheet) contains a hidden Messianic prophecy teaching us that the son will be the head of all things. ***Bar*** is the Aramaic word for "son" and ***resh*** means "head, chief" as well as "starting point". The use of the direct object pointer, as showing what part of a Hebrew sentence receives an action, is also a hint for the deeper truth of the son as the Alef and Tav (the first and the last), the beginning and the completion.

Notice the chronological pattern within creation itself. First YHWH speaks ("the Word") and then He creates (became flesh). His first creation is light which is ***aur*** in Hebrew, the Aramaic word for "Torah" is related to that root and used by the rabbis of the Talmud: ***aurayta***. So "let there be light" also suggests, "let there be Torah"; just as within the word ***b'resheet*** (in the beginning) is the word ***breet*** (covenant). These are clues about who the Son was from the very beginning (the Word), but also that he would be the Living Torah. Mashiyach himself would keep (observe) Torah and as the "first fruits" of all creation he would write Torah upon the hearts of everyone who puts their trust in him.

Almah

"…behold a virgin shall conceive…" Isaiah 7:14

Over the past 2,000 years, perhaps no passage of Scripture has elicited more controversy between Jews and Christians than the virgin or maiden of Isaiah 7:14. Modern Rabbinical Jews insist that the prophet is writing about people and events – including himself and his family – that are rooted solely in his time and therefore cannot be relevant to the birth of Y'shua some 700 years later.

Christians, on the other hand, insist with equal fervor that the word in question, *almah*, refers to a virgin birth that would have nothing to do with Isaiah at all. Their studies often focus on how *almah* was rendered as "virgin" in two key translations of the Tanakh that were done prior to the controversy.

Regardless of our personal perspectives, one Jew two millennia ago took a radical view of this passage and greatly influenced the entire field of biblical studies, only to have his unique vision lost, even to his most ardent supporters. His name: Levi Bar Alphaeus, known more popularly to the world as the Apostle Matthew.

To Rabbinical Jews, Matthew was a heretic, plain and simple. However, recent scholarship, such as Paul Bradshaw's *Passover and Easter: Origin and History to Modern Times* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), suggests that the rabbis' ancient counterparts were not so closed-minded. The First Century Rabbi Gamaliel, tutor to the Apostle Paul (Acts 22:1-2) and grandson of the great Rabbi Hillel, is recorded as having written a parody on Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew[1]. That being the case, it would have required the Rabbi to have at least read the Gospel in the first place and become familiar with its approach and terminology. It is also worth pointing out that large portions of Y'shua's parables were copied and inserted almost verbatim into the Talmud 200 years later.[2]

Furthermore, the picture that continues to emerge is that there was a frequent dialogue and mutual influence between the Nazarene and Rabbinic camps during the First Century which later editors of the Mishnah tried to edit out of their official records. However, fortunately for us, they did not completely succeed.[3]

First to the Jews

The strongest aspect to the Jewish argument on Isaiah 7:14 is also the most obvious. It's called "reading the first thirteen verses before talking about verse fourteen"! To wit: ***In the days of Ahaz*** *the son of Jotham, son of Uzzi'ah, king of Judah, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remali'ah the king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but they could not conquer it. When the house of David was told, "Syria is in league with E'phraim," his heart and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.*

And YHWH said to Isaiah, Go forth to meet Ahaz, you and She'ar-jash'ub your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field, and say to him, 'Take heed, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remali'ah. Because Syria, with

E'phraim and the son of Remali'ah, has devised evil against you, saying, "Let us go up against Judah and terrify it, and let us conquer it for ourselves, and set up the son of Ta'be-el as king in the midst of it,'"

Thus says YHWH ELOHIM: 'It shall not stand, and it shall not come to pass. ***For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin. (Within sixty-five years E'phraim will be broken to pieces so that it will no longer be a people.) And the head of E'phraim is Sama'ria, and the head of Sama'ria is the son of Remali'ah. If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established.'"***

Again YHWH spoke to Ahaz, 'Ask a sign of YHWH your Elohim*; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.' But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask, and I will not put YHWH to the test.' And he said, 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my Eloah also?'"*

If Isaiah 7:1-13 sets the scene for us this is what we know:

- The start of Isaiah's prophecy in this chapter is rooted during his day, specifically the time of King Ahaz, and not seven centuries later. In fact, as early as verse 3, we see YHWH

1 That is, in Hebrew letters, but in the Aramaic language. There is no question that *ktav asshuri* script was used for both Hebrew and Aramaic inscriptions in First Century Israel.

2 See Andrew Gabriel Roth's *Signs of the Cross*, p. 17-41 for a thorough treatment about how parables such as those in Luke 14:1-24 were largely adapted by Judah the Prince in his version of the Mishnah.

3 See Neal Altman, *Support for the Authenticity of the Gospel of Matthew Comes from an Unlikely Place*, (Kansas City Star, June 7, 2003).

telling Isaiah to speak these words of comfort to Ahaz directly.

- The time-limit for this prophecy is clearly established in verse 8 as 65 years, so once again this is not talking about Y'shua's day.
- The *"sign"* that is about to be revealed in verse 14 is one that YHWH prompts Ahaz to ask of Him, yet another indicator tying the prophecy to the time of Isaiah.

Therefore, it is only with this background that the next line can be interpreted: *"Therefore YHWH Himself will give you a sign. Behold, a **young woman** (almah--*אלמא*) shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Imman'u-el. He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. **For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."***

As we can easily see, the birth of *Immanuel* is within the lifetime of the two earthly kings mentioned earlier. So where is Y'shua in all of this, the rabbis rightly ask? In fact, if you follow the line to the end of chapter 7, and even well into chapter 8, there is no indication of a future well beyond the 65-year window that the prophet himself gives. That being the case, by this reasoning, Matthew's direct quoting of this passage in support of a *virgin birth* seems at best misguided and at worst, irresponsibly deceptive….

And then to the Christians

The Christian side of this argument has the unfortunate general and prevailing attitude that the Tanakh should simply be ignored in favor of the "higher" revelation of the New Testament. This particular attitude, however, was condemned by another group of very pious and orthodox Jews, straight out of the "New Testament" who warned us to keep the Torah at all costs: Luke, James, Peter , John and Paul who made comments such as the following:

*"Do we nullify the Torah through faith? YHWH forbid! Rather, we **establish** the Torah"* (Romans 3:31). See also Luke 16:17, Romans 7:12, James 1:22-25; 2:8-10, 1 Peter 1:23-25, 2 Peter 1:19, 1 John 3:4 and Revelation 12:17.

The Rabbinical school points out that *almah* means "young woman" as does the NKJV Christian translation. When the Christian then asks, "But it says it's a sign, so what is so miraculous about a young woman bearing a son and calling him a common Jewish name?" The rabbi has a ready-made answer: Put simply, YHWH is clearly asking Ahaz to select a miracle that will make the king feel more confident. Then, in line 14, Isaiah says to Ahaz that, because he did not pick a sign, YHWH would pick one for him.[4] This young woman, who turns out to be Isaiah's wife and a prophetess in her own right, is *herself a sign by her very existence, as well as the existence of her son*. In other words, the pregnancy alone is the sign of encouragement that YHWH is giving to Ahaz.

When the Christian follows up with the fact that Rebekah, who was a virgin, is also called *almah*, the rabbis show Proverbs 30:18-20, where an adulteress was called the same thing.[5] As if that was not bad enough, the rabbis can even show that the most ancient version of Isaiah, the Dead Sea Scrolls, also says *almah!*[6] But, as good as the Rabbinical argument is, it also has a serious flaw, a nasty snaking crack in its otherwise perfect interpretive wall: *"Behold a **parthenos** (**virgin--**παρθενοσ) will conceive and bear a son, and you will call him Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14 Septuagint reading, ca. 250 BCE).

4 But not exclusively for Ahaz alone, as we will see later on.

5 This reading, linking the adulterous woman with *almah,* is granted somewhat controversial. Nevertheless, it is easy to see why such a linkage is widely held among rabbinical adherents. They are probably right, but the distance of those two words in the text makes a definitive verdict impossible. The bottom line is that I am willing to grant the full argument to the rabbis in this instance, because even if everything they say is true, their fundamental flaw in not seeing the embedded characteristics of Isaiah 7-9 remains.

6 See Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint & Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, p. 281. Not only does the Dead Sea Scrolls version read "young woman" but the rest of the line is "has conceived and is bearing a son"; yet more proof that this part of the prophecy applies to Isaiah's time, not Y'shua's.

The Jewish scholars from Jerusalem knew Isaiah 7:14 relates to Isaiah's time, and more to the point, they knew Isaiah's wife did not have a virgin birth and translated *almah* into the virgin-exclusive term *parthenos* anyway! How could that be Christian bias then, if the translation was done by Jews more than two centuries before Y'shua was even born? Now, here is what the Jews of Babylon, whose descendants helped compile the Talmud, wrote in their Aramaic version of Isaiah almost 200 years later:

"*Behold a* ***beytola*** (***virgin--***בתולא) *will conceive and bear a son, and you will call him Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14 Aramaic Peshitta Tanakh reading, ca. 100 BCE).

Once again, we see virgin exclusive terminology, and this time by a Jewish group universally acknowledged by biblical scholars to be much closer to the Apostolic Age than the LXX redactor was. Furthermore, the fact is, there is an ancient Hebrew variant behind both the LXX and the Peshitta Tanakh reading, as is testified by both groups involved in their respective works' production.

Now let's compare the Greek with the Aramaic:

> "Behold a ***parthenos*** will conceive and bear a son..." (Matthew 1:23).
>
> "Behold a ***beytolta***[7] will conceive and bear a son..." (Matthew 1:23).

Suddenly, Matthew is not as simple as some might posture, here is a man adding his voice to the traditions of his own scholarly ancestors since these are the exact same words! There are all kinds of definitions for the word "virgin" but let's take a look at the definition the Torah gives for "marriageable maiden":

"The girl was very beautiful, a <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ)[8] *and no man had had relations with her; and she went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up"* (Genesis 24:16).

"A widow, or a divorced woman, or one who is profaned by harlotry, these he (the high priest) may not take; but rather he is to marry a <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ), of his own people…" (Leviticus 21:13-14).

"If a man takes a wife and, after lying with her, dislikes her and slanders her and give her a bad name, saying, "I married this woman, but when I approached her I did not find proof that she was a <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ)*, then the girl's father and mother shall bring proof that she was a* <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ) *to the town elders at the gate. The girl's father shall say to the elders, "I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he dislikes her. Now he has slandered her and said, I did not find your daughter to be a* <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ)*, but here is proof of my daughter's virginity."*

Then the parent shall display the cloth before the elders of the town, and the elders shall take the man and punish him. They shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give them to the girl's father, because this man has given an Israelite <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ) *a bad name. She will continue to be his wife; he must not divorce her as long as he lives"* (Deuteronomy 22:13-19).

"If a man happens to meet in town a <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ) *pledged to be married and he sleeps with her, you shall take both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death"* (Deuteronomy 22:23-24).

"For as a young man marries a <u>*virgin*</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ)*, so your sons will marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your Elohim will rejoice over you"* (Isaiah 62:5).

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7 These are the exact same words, *beytola* and *beytolta*, rendered slightly differently due to dialectical variances that arise regionally and also with the passage of time. The Hebrew version of the word, *beytola* (בתולה), also retains this precise meaning.

8 It should be pointed out that because of conjugation issues in Greek, technically speaking the spelling of *parthenos* is not uniform. However, whatever form such variations appear in, they are the same word. For example, in the LXX version of Joel 1:8, the word appears as *parqenkon*.

"Can a <u>virgin</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ) forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number" (Jeremiah 2:32).

"Wail like a <u>virgin</u> (בתולה/παρθενοσ) girded with sackcloth, for the bridegroom of her youth" (Joel 1:8).

Put simply, there is not a single biblical reference to a *beytolta* or a *parthenos* having had sexual relations prior to meeting their husbands.[9]

The Almah Connection

Thus far, we have only discussed two meanings of the word *almah* (אלמא), that of "young woman" and "virgin". These are the two meanings that are most apparent given the context of the passage. However, Hebrew has a tendency to have additional meanings heaped onto a given collection of letters that are not necessarily the exact same word, but nevertheless are valid owing to the divine arrangement of every stroke of every letter. If we then can study the numerical value of Hebrew words in an attempt to understand their deep relationships, then surely looking at identical spelling configurations and their concordant meanings is an equally beneficial pursuit. In terms of the gematria of course, these words would be related to one another anyway because their numerical values would be identical. Going by this standard then, אלמא does not just have two meanings that are relevant to our study, but five, and these meanings could very well be the key that unlocks Matthew's understanding of Isaiah 7:14. Without going into much further detail, however, it is also important to note that, in Ezekiel 36:24-27, the nations are scattered throughout the Earth, and this references the wider world – which also happens to be a phrase spelled the same as *almah!*

*"And behold I am with you always, even unto the end of the **world** (almah--אלמא)"* (Matthew 28:20).

And of course Y'shua is called the "light of the world" (אלמא),[10] in John 1:4 and 9:5, marrying the dual meanings of light/Torah and young woman/world perfectly. There is also a clear linkage between the "light of men" in John 1:4, and the "light of the nations" language in Isaiah. On the other hand, that line in Matthew 28:20 can also be read another way, due to yet another meaning of this phrase:

*"And behold I am with you always, even unto the end of the **age** (almah--אלמא)"* (Matthew 28:20).

Interestingly enough, the Greek word *aion* which is also used here, means "world" and "age", one of the few times such a precise match between languages has been found in their respective versions of the Renewed Covenant. Be that as it may, however, the fact is "world" and "eternity" are ideas bound together in Hebraic thought. When the rabbis for example talk about *olam haba*, the world that is to come, it is also known as the eternal place. Surely then the use of אלמא by Isaiah when more precise terms could have been utilized, hints that there is more to this prophecy than a young woman bearing a son named Immanuel! This "son" instead, is the shadow for the type of the other Son, who is born of and whose goings forth are from ***eternity*** (Micah 5:1-2)[11], and yet he also rules the ***world***, (Daniel 7:1-13)!

---

9 Torah however does allow for a virgin who is seduced to be married to the man who forced himself on her. In that case, while technically the בתולה/παρθενοσ did have sex, she is not blamed and retains that title, because the man who took her virginity did shortly thereafter become her husband, just as a regular young maiden who was not seduced would have been (Exodus 22:16). The salient point is that Scripture never calls a woman who did not marry the first man she had sex with a בתולה/παρθενοσ, and so by that definition Joseph expected his wife Mary to be fully chaste.

10 It should be noted that the word for "light" in Aramaic is different from the Hebrew; however that is fine because *nohra*, which means "flame" or "light" and is the phrase from which the Hanukkah *menorah* is derived, also dovetails with evidence in John's Gospel that Y'shua was conceived during this time, the Festival of Lights!

11 Granted, the word in Micah is a synonym for אלמא, which is *meqedem*, but that works too for two reasons. First, the word is derived from *qedem/qadim* that also means "eastern or ancient". Micah himself was born in the town of Moreseth Gath (Micah 1:14, Jeremiah 26:18), and so from his perspective he is writing about events in Bethlehem, located directly northeast from his position! And second, Micah uses *meqedem* as a synonym for *olam* in 5:1-2, and this is of course the cognate of the Aramaic *almah* that we have linked with identical spelling to the *almah* in Isaiah 7:14!

The Rest of the Vision

Moving onto Isaiah 9, we see that the infant being talked about there is not the same one that began in Isaiah's time two chapters earlier. Let's see why: *"Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased its joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy at the harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as on the day of Mid'ian.* ***For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Elohim, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of YHWH of hosts will do this"*** (Isaiah 9:3-7).

So, after the people in Galilee see a great light, the conditions at that time also appear ripe for war. Can this be an apt description of the troubles of King Ahaz with Syria? Absolutely. However, it is equally apt to the position Jews found themselves in seven centuries later, under the oppression of the Roman Empire, so here again we see that the *shadow* of chapter 7 has manifest itself in chapter 9. Obviously, Isaiah's own child is not called "Wonderful, Counselor…" because we already know the name of that child as *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (Isaiah 8:3), since that portion of the prophecy is still within the 65-year window. Isaiah would also surely not name his son *the Mighty Elohim, the everlasting Father*, because that would be blasphemous!

However, those titles would be appropriate for a promised Messiah whom Isaiah himself referred to as a righteous branch and to having the Spirit of YHWH rest upon him (Isaiah 11:1-2), because the Spirit of YHWH is that of the Mighty Elohim and the Everlasting Father, since they are one and the same! As for the rest of the portion, *and the government will be on his shoulder* cannot refer to Isaiah's child either, because only the king's descendants had the right to rule in Israel. And so, even though the sign of Isaiah's newborn son was meant for Ahaz, that son cannot be the ruler referred to here in chapter 9, and yet *almah* links them both!

Then, as if this were not a strong enough point, we are told that this child's government is eternal and that he himself will rule forever – something not even Ahaz or his descendants could rightfully claim. The text literally reads that *"**he** will uphold it now and forevermore."*

Notice that after 9:7 another stray letter appears; a *samekh*. Its appearance and symbolism tells us that the long-term prophecy is now also sealed up, and the balance of chapter 9 shifts back to present and near future. This was done, at the key juncture between 8:15 and 8:16, when the short-term prophecy was also sealed symbolically and by direct reference with this same letter.

However, before wrapping this up, it is fair to ask where that last meaning of *almah*, namely "virgin" is finally found. The answer is in the lines we just looked at, because in order to have a ruler live forever, as 9:1-5 clearly states, that person must also be without sin, because the soul that sins surely dies (Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23). So, if sin prevents us from immortality, as is clearly the case with Adam and Eve, then it stands to reason that another process must occur in order for that person to escape the inheritance of Adam.

This seems to be why Matthew saw the *almah* word in Isaiah 7:14 as a root from which multiple lexical branches sprang, reaching all the way to the time when he would have to talk about another *almah*, this time a virgin, conceiving and bearing a son. In doing so, Matthew then saw the same thing that the compilers of the LXX and Peshitta Tanakh did, and therefore quoting the first part (7:14) in Matthew's mind must have been tantamount to bringing all these future shadow-type-extra meanings also to the table.

Furthermore, Matthew surely would have seen the Zechariah 12:10 image of YHWH saying He was pierced but they mourned for *him* - the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 52:14-53:12), as the *only*

begotten son. The word in Hebrew, *yachid,* is an exclusive singularity, meaning that the rules for Messiah could never apply to anyone else, either before or since Y'shua. Hence, referring to 7:14 and then part of Isaiah 9 just a little bit later (Matthew 4:15-16), was sufficient for the Gospel writer to make his case from Tanakh.

And finally, it is probably also the case that Matthew himself expected his readers to search the Scriptures to see why he made the choices he did, which may also go a long way to explaining why Matthew quotes from Tanakh 128 times, way more than any other Gospel writer.

A Prophet like Moshe

"YHWH will raise up for you a prophet like me from among yourselves, from your own kinsmen. You are to pay attention to him…" Deuteronomy 18:15

Contrary to popular opinion, Moshe was not *"the Lawgiver"*; he was the man whom YHWH chose to reveal His Torah. Y'shua Mashiyach was not *"the Lawgiver"* either; he was and is the Word of YHWH who came from the Father in physical bodily form to "reveal the Father."

Many of the commandments that Moshe taught were clearly given before the flood, specifically the *Eser haDibrot* (Ten Commandments). In the same fashion Mashiyach Y'shua did not bring any of his own *"new"* commandments, but rather, he brought a Renewed Covenant. In Aramaic ***"khawdata"*** literally means "renewal" or "to make new," therefore the New Covenant is a "renewal" or a "making new" of the Covenant YHWH had formerly established between Himself and His people. Every commandment that Y'shua taught had its origin in Torah, and Mashiyach magnified the Torah. Torah is a book of Love, Grace and Mercy which is the basis for all Justice on earth and in heaven; but it is Mashiyach who is a prophet like Moshe who harmonizes Torah and Covenant according to the original Truth and intent of Torah.

"The Torah" which Mashiyach revealed is "very broad" – far beyond the boundaries of human intellect. Rav Shaul taught that "the Torah is Spiritual"; therefore to have Torah written upon our hearts means to have the Spirit of Mashiyach within us. Mashiyach is the focal point of life; everything is harmonized and unified in the spiritual and physical worlds according to Mashiyach. As Moshe clearly spelled out the "blessings and curses," Mashiyach elucidated mankind on how to draw close to YHWH – or how to deny Him by turning away from Torah.

Torah is a universe within itself, with dimensions that mankind has not begun to either plumb or comprehend; yet many foolishly "brush off" both Torah and Y'shua because they erroneously believe they are intellectually and spiritually equipped to assess the Word of Elohim according to their own "higher criticism." Y'shua said *"…if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments"* (Matthew 19:17); in other words, life begins when we surrender ourselves and keep YHWH's commandments. *"He who desires to do His will can comprehend my teaching, if it is from Elohim, or if from my own will I speak"* (John 7:17). Therefore, if we do not "do His will" neither will we understand or experience how Mashiyach and Torah unify all things.

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto you, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I shall command him" (D'varim/Deut. 18:18). (See also John 6:14.) Torah came and dwelt among us in the body of Mashiyach ben Yoseph who is the Salvation of YHWH. Through the Mashiyach, *"Messiah Consciousness"* is accessible to bring humankind into harmony with each other, with Creation around us and to the Father. A careful examination of Torah reveals that mankind has been endowed with limitless potential, but we have struggled to bring harmony to ourselves and to the worlds over which we were given responsibility – which is why Mashiyach came to bring redemption.

If mankind is enslaved by injustice, we can only blame ourselves for choosing to live contrary to Mashiyach who is the Prophet like Moses. Though most of the world is busy remodeling the

tower of Babel, the followers of Mashiyach recognize the futility of man's rebellion against the Perfection of Mashiyach which is able to preserve humankind and ensure abundant prosperity for everyone. Even while mankind continues to destroy the "pale blue dot," leaving devastating moral poverty, famine, injustice and horror in his wake, Mashiyach is setting forth the Standard that judges all manner of unrighteousness. Moshe demanded of Pharaoh to *"Let my people go"* (Sh'mot/Ex. 5:1), but it is Mashiyach who vests his followers with the power of freedom from within to stop sinning, and stop rebellion, and to turn from all manner of destructive habit to be conformed into the *"Image of Elohim."* Y'shua came in the authority of his Father, he said; *"These words that I speak, I do not speak of myself but He who dwells in me, my Father does these works"* (John 14:10).

Aramaic or Greek Lingua Franca?

All of Rav Shaul's epistles (with the possible exception of Philemon since it was sent through a Roman contact, then to the assembly) were sent to Synagogues that contained Jewish and Gentile believers whose *halakha* (legal faith practices) were governed by Ya'akov HaTzadik (James the Just) head of the Jerusalem Assembly. This is why in Acts 9 and 15 James writes letters in Aramaic (about circumcision and other matters) for individuals like Rav Shaul to deliver. Once delivered, a meturgeman (targumist) would translate the letters into Greek for Greek speaking members. There is plenty of evidence indicating inconsistency of Greek translation quality of Paul's original Aramaic letters. Galatians was a terrible translation disaster, but 1 Corinthians was reasonably well translated. But there is clear evidence that Rav Shaul was well aware that "wolves" were going to misconstrue everything he said to posture their own ideas, for example:

1) 1 Corinthians 16:22 has the Aramaic phrase Maran Atha (our Master [Y'shua] comes) but why would he write this to a Greek audience? Using Maran Atha indicates two things: a) This is a "distinguishing mark" that Rav Shaul refers to elsewhere as being in all his letters, a code word to authenticate his material from the many fakes that we know were circulating early. See also 2 Thess. 3:17. Since the autographs are lost but the text is faithfully preserved in the Peshitta Aramaic traditions, it appears that Maran Atha appeared as some kind of seal or marking, but in 1 Cor. Rav Shaul chose to insert it in the body of the text. b) The expectation by this distinguishing mark indicates that at least *one person* at the synagogue would be able to translate that Aramaic phrase for a Greek audience. The NT shows elsewhere in Acts 10 that Hebrew synagogue services were translated into Greek for the benefit of people like Cornelius. There is no reason to assume given the similar letters that James has delivered to Jews and Gentiles that the exact same process did not happen from the Aramaic to Greek Epistles. By this method, everything Rav Shaul wrote, with the possible exception of Philemon, can be easily shown to have been targummed from Aramaic into Greek at the assembly level.

2) Paul states that he has a poor scribal hand/training in Galatians 6:11. He also admits in a variety of places that he has both co-writers and co-translators into Greek, as well as those who help him speak wherever he goes. We read in 2 Peter 3:15 and 16 where Peter states that Paul's letters are *"difficult to understand"* and those who are *"ignorant and unstable pervert"* what he writes as well as the *"other scripture"*. Paul's letters were not considered as "Scripture." The Scripture was and is the Torah, Prophets and Writings (Tanakh) and evidently the "theologians" that Peter talks about did not have a foundation in Tanakh; plus, they most likely bungled Paul's writings because of it. However, we also see that both letters to the Thessalonians are from "Paul, Silas and Timothy." That is also why the scribe Tertius writes his own name at the end of Romans (16:22) and why John Mark's absence at Pamphylia results in Rav Shaul needing to travel with Luke and others instead. Put simply, Rav Shaul goes nowhere outside of Israel without a Greek translator like Barnabbas, John-Mark, Luke, etc.

3) There are many examples indicating good and bad targumming from Aramaic and into Greek, clearly indicating that Paul's writings or dictation was originally in Aramaic.

If Luke was a Gentile why then would he write in Aramaic rather than Greek?

Luke's Greek is the best by far in the Renewed Covenant writings, but the First Century Jewish historian Josephus' Greek is superior; and Josephus admits several times that he wrote his histories in Aramaic and that even after nearly 30 years of living in Rome he was still not proficient in Greek. What is true for Josephus must also be considered for both Luke and Paul. Rav Shaul was a Pharisee who studied under Rabbi Gamaliel but Josephus descended from both priests and kings and was a leading Pharisee of his day.

Luke may have been a Gentile, but he was likely a Semitic Gentile. Although he worked in Troas, Asia Minor, he was born and raised in, "Antioch boomeus en" or "The famous Antioch," meaning the one in Syria, not Pisdia. Syrian Antioch had a huge native Aramaic speaking population and it is from "Syria" that we get Syriac, a synonym for Aramaic. Aramaic speaking Jews and pagans have been living there for millennia. On the other hand, Antioch was also the seat of Roman power from at least 65 BCE (the Seleucids 100 years earlier, also Greek speakers), and the other half of the city was fully Hellenized as well. It was a center of tremendous Greco-Roman learning eclipsed perhaps only by Alexandria Egypt and her great library there. There was perhaps no city on earth at that time more capable of producing the most sophisticated bi-lingual scholars than was the city of Luke's birth. Therefore, his Greek mastery should be no surprise or unexplainable within the Aramaic primacist model. But even if Luke's Greek is superior to the rest of the NT, this is not saying it is at par with wider classical standards, but only in comparison to the other targumists. From the reality of the Roman occupation there was no such thing as "KOINE Greek," only good and bad classical Greek. The Alexandrian dialect of Classical Greek was likely similar to the way Americans mangle the English language and yet it is still understood by British folks even though they might wince at the different accents and expressions.

Frequently what we see in the NT Greek are attempts to retain Semitic word order which is opposite from the Classical or retain other Semitisms like *casus pendens* (and it happened while in the doing...). The tendency for Semitisms in NT Greek (things like NOT FEAR instead of FEAR NOT) were so great that some scholars in the 19th century posited a "Jewish Greek" dialect. The Western theological posturing of Greek *lingua franca* among the original followers of Y'shua versus tribal Hebrew and Aramaic vernacular is extremely far fetched when we understand that the original followers of Y'shua relied on the Hebrew Tanakh to prove or disprove Y'shua being Mashiyach. The highest authority of Scripture and ideas from which to make your best arguments come from the Tanakh. When evangelizing both Jews and Gentiles it was and is imperative to teach from the Tanakh to establish context and history. When sharing ideas, values, terms and definitions that pertain to the Kingdom of Elohim and are as important as life itself, every individual prefers their vernacular language, most certainly not a vehicular language.

Brooke Foss Westcott (1825 - 1901) wrote that the Greek NT had an original Aramaic autograph; *"Moreover it is known that books were soon translated from Syriac into Greek, and while such an intercourse existed it is scarcely possible to believe that the Scriptures themselves remained untranslated. The same conclusion follows from the controversial writings of Bardesanes* [154 - 222] *which necessarily imply the existence of a Syriac Version of the Bible. Tertullian's* [160 - 225] *example may show that he could hardly have refuted Marcion* [85 - 160] *without the constant use of Scripture. And more than this, Eusebius tells us that Hegisippius* [110 - 180] *'made quotations from the Gospel according the Hebrews and the Syriac and especially from* [writings in] *the Hebrew language,' showing thereby that he was a Christian of Hebrew descent. This testimony is valuable coming from the only early Greek writer likely to have been familiar with Syriac literature.... Ephraem Syrus* [306 - 373], *a deacon of Edessa, treats the* [Aramaic] *Version in such a manner as to prove that it was already old in the fourth century. But meanwhile there is no sufficient reason to desert the opinion that has obtained the sanction of the most competent scholars that its formation should be fixed to the first half of the second century: The text, even in its present revised form, exhibits remarkable agreement with the most ancient Greek Manuscripts and the earliest quotations from. The very obscurity that hangs over its origin is a proof of its venerable age."* A General Survey of the History and Canon of the New Testament" (Seventh Edition, 1896), p. 244-8.

Aramaic Primer

Both the Hebrew and Aramaic alap-beet (alphabet) are relatively easy to learn. The many transliterated words throughout this publication will give the reader a familiarity with the sounds and easier identification of the Aramaic words in Hebrew letters, and perhaps even inspire the reader to learn the languages.

Original ancient Aramaic and Hebrew writings did not originally have written vowels, but centuries later various vowel pointing systems were introduced to standardize pronunciation of the text. However, it is simple to show how the ancient pronunciation was well known in the Middle East and harks back directly to Y`shua`s time, as well as to the dialect that he and his followers originally spoke.

As the centuries passed, rivalries between various assemblies forced the competing religious groups to alter the original Aramaic Estrangela alap-beet and introduce vowel pointing systems so no one group's manuscripts could be mis-construed as coming from the rival group.[12] In the end, this divergence in pronunciation and new appearance of the Aramaic alap-beet marked the divisions that we broadly know today as Eastern and Western Aramaic.[13]

The Eastern system is comprised of a series of dots that go above and below a letter and, in addition, the Eastern style slightly modified five of their letters from the older Estrangela style. By contrast, the Western system used reverse Greek letters to indicate which vowels were intended, but then turned the Estrangela into an extremely hard to read Arabic-looking alap-beet known as Serto.

Throughout the rest of the 19th and 20th centuries, many great academic works in Europe and America, such as *Compendious Syriac* by Payne Smith, then adopted full Serto style. The result was that Serto, while most familiar to these academics, nevertheless became frowned by later Peshitta Primacist scholars who were familiar with the original.

That being said, the reversal of Serto is evident in newer works such as Daniel Mahar's "Aramaic Made E-Z" (Aramaic Bible Society, 2001), which went with the best of both worlds, retaining the original Estrangela consonants for easy reading, combined with the Western vowel pointing.

The result: A beautiful modified font known as Estrangela Midyat that maintains the overall original manuscript look while giving the intermediate Bible student a much easier way to approach the general pronunciation of the text. This approach is very much consistent with trends in Hebrew education. Hebrew students know that the prayer books are vowel pointed but Torah scrolls are not. And so, after weighing all these factors such as purity of original presentation against scholarly clarity, the first two editions of the AENT employed this compromise solution; however, the reader must understand that this is not exactly how the original manuscripts appeared. So, with these ideas in mind, the chart indicates both the consonants and vowels that form the basis for this system.

12 Ironically western scholars in the 19th century ignored Middle Eastern traditions on this score and provided the lone exception to this easy rule. They thought the Western Aramaic manuscripts were the oldest and most original even when the Syrian Church told them otherwise! Even today, most authoritative western studies on Aramaic remain in the Western dialect of Serto, along with their pointing. The problem even extends to the fact that later additions to the Peshitta on the Western side were accepted as original readings, even though they clearly were not.

13 Both combating groups, the Church of the East and the Syrian Orthodox Church, maintain the use of Estrangela for headings and titles of important documents and acknowledge Estrangela as the oldest alap-beet, the original style of the oldest manuscripts that they have preserved. Both sides also agree the Eastern pronunciation is the original one used by Y'shua and the apostles. Finally, both groups have actively begun talks that are, if not bringing them back together, are creating greater understanding and agreement between them, even though this linguistic divide is likely to stay intact for the foreseeable future.

While the text in this diglot is meant for the average Hebrew reader to approximate Aramaic sounds, there are numerous elements we must bear in mind when vocalizing Aramaic:

• Not all Aramaic sounds are carried over into Hebrew. In particular, the letter *beyt* occasionally takes on a W sound whereas a standard ruchaka pointing of it as a BGDKPT[14] letter might have normally called for something closer to a V. For example, "Abraham" lacking a *dagesh lene* ("heart dot") would more likely be rendered as "Avraham" in Hebrew but is actually "Awraham" in Aramaic.[15] As this is quite common in Aramaic pronunciation of names, the reader should check the transliterated English words of the AENT for the proper sounding.

• Aramaic has one extra prepositional prefix or proclitic than Hebrew, the letter *dalet* which can mean "of, that, who, or which" and that will change the way the rest of the word is accented as a leading syllable. Other uses of *dalet* in genitive form or as "because" are more complex and fall outside of the scope of this discussion.

• In general terms a *segol* is treated the same way as a *sere*. Even though technically speaking some grammarians look at the *segol* as a long vowel and the *sere* as a short one, each for the medium length "*e*" sound (as in "Elephant" or "end").

• A similar thing applies generally but not exclusively to the vowels *patah* and *kamets*. The former is thought of as a short vowel and the latter the long version of the same medium "*a*" sound (as in "bat" or "cat"). However, it is more precise to point out that a *patah* is most appropriate in a closed syllable where the consonant containing the *patah* is stressed. A *kamets* is most appropriate in an open syllable attached to a consonant that is not stressed in a word.

• Kamets Hatuf is a variation of the Kamets where the Hatuf is pronounced ha-toof; the *h* sound is the *h* or *ch* of the Aramaic letter Chet. It looks identical to the Kamets; a small inverted T shape under the letter. However, it is pronounced *o*, like on or gone. Almost always the normal Kamets is used (pronounced a), but in a small number of words Kamets Hatuf is used instead. Kamets Hatuf (pronounced *o*) is only used when there is a closed, unaccented syllable. Two common Hebrew words with the Kamets Hatuf are kol: all, each, every; is pronounced *kol*, not kal. Wisdom is pronounced *hoch-ma*, not hach-ma.

• Kamets or Patah followed by Yood, the Aramaic vowels are immediately followed by the *ee* sound of the Aramaic letter Yood. Pronounced together, they are similar to the English words eye or I. Kamets or Patah followed by Waw, the Aramaic Vowels are followed by the *v* sound of the Aramaic letter Waw. Pronounced together, they are similar to the "av" in English words such as have.

• Dagesh is a dot which occurs inside a Aramaic letter. Dagesh in Aramaic is not really a vowel, but it affects the way the Aramaic letters are pronounced. It occurs when an Aramaic letter is doubled, for emphasis. Most of the time the presence of Dagesh makes

14 BGDKPT is a shorthand employed by Hebrew grammarians to indicate six letters that can have either a hard or a soft pronunciation: beyt (b), gimel (g), dalet (d), kaph (k), peh (p) and taw (t).

15 The reader should bear in mind that these general descriptions are no substitute for a solid biblical Hebrew grammar. My favorite one, Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar by Paige Kelley, is especially targeted at showing the reader examples in Biblical passages as opposed to more modern Hebrew phraseology. They also provide an excellent companion handbook to provide the student exercises to bolster their study. This resource correctly points out (p. 12-13) that what I call a "heart dot" can be either a dagesh lene, or a dot that instructs a hard pronunciation for BGDKPT letters or a dagesh forte that doubles the sound of a letter. They look identical, the only way to know which is correct is to understand that a dagesh lene never stands after a vowel whereas a dagesh forte always stands immediately after a vowel. It's rules like these that make supplementing this guide absolutely essential for proper understanding of all the rules of Hebrew vowel pointing.

Hebrew	Letter Name	English Equivalent	Numerical Value	Aramaic (*Estrangelo*)	Estrangelo Midyat
א	Aleph	A	1		
ב	Beyt	B	2		
ג	Gimel	G	3		
ד	Dalet	D	4		
ה	Heh	H	5		
ו	Waw/Vav[16]	W/V	6		
ז	Zayin	Z	7		
ח	Kheth	H	8		
ט	Teth	T	9		
י	Yodh	Y	10		
כ ך	Kaph	K, Kh	20	[17]	[18]
ל	Lamed/ Lamed-Alap[19]	L	30		
מ ם	Meem	M	40		[20]
נ ן	Noon	N	50		[21]
ס	Semkath	S	60		
ע	Aih	Ai, or silent	70		
פ ף	Peh	P	80		
צ	Tsade	Ts	90		
ק	Kuph	Q	100		
ר	Resh	R	200		
שׁ	Sheen	Sh	300		
ת	Taw/Taw-Alap	T, Th	400		

no difference to the way the Aramaic letter is pronounced. The Aramaic letters Beet, Kap and Pe, sound differently when a Dagesh is added. These Aramaic letters are pronounced b, k and p, but without Dagesh they are pronounced v, ch and f.

Vowel	Name	Vowels and Special Letters
אָ ד	Qamats	**ah** as in father
אַ ـ	Patach	**ah** as in father
אֶ ֶ	Segol	**eh** as in pet
אִ ִ	Chiraq	**ee** as in bee
אֻ ֻ	Qibbutz	**u** as in blue
אַ ـַ	Ruchaka	soft pronounciation of BGDKPT
בּ ב ּ	Dagesh	without dagesh Beet, Kap and Pe are pronounced v, ch and f

From here, it is easy to see how these same vowels are applied to the Aramaic text, in this case the very first line from the Epistle to Titus:

פַּוּלָוס עַבְדֵּה דַּאלָהָא וַשלִיחֵה דִּישֻׁוע מְשִׁיחָא בְּהֵימָנֻותָא
דַּגַבָּיָא דַּאלָהָא וִידַּעתָא דַּשרָרָא דַּבְדַּחלַת אַלָהָא׃

Paw-los, aib-deh d'Eloah,[22] *w'shlikha d'Ey-shoo-wah*[23] *Meshikha b'haymanootha d'gabaya d'Eloah w'yadota d'sharara d'abdekhlat Eloah.*

Paulos, a servant of Eloah and an apostle of Y'shua the Messiah, by the faith of those chosen of Eloah, and the knowledge of the truth of the awe of Eloah.[24]

16 Waw or the W sound, is the more ancient pronunciation in both Hebrew and Aramaic. However, later Hebrew literature leans more to the Vav or V sound for the 6th letter.
17 Any joined and final forms of these letters are represented after the main forms, provided there are significant differences in appearance. This is done even if the actual writing methods between the main and joined forms diverge significantly.
18 Letters Kaph, Mem and Noon are written differently when at the end of a word, here the two letters are joined together.
19 A calligraphic style of Estrangela is to combine the Lamed and Aleph letters, as well as the Taw and Aleph letters, when they are the last two letters of a word. Both endings are very common in Aramaic words.
20 The Mem and final Mem that is used at the end of a word are joined together here.
21 The Noon appears in three forms in both the Estrangela and Midyat columns. In the Midyat column the right-most figure is a combination of the letter as it appears at the beginning of a word (ܢ) followed by how it looks at the end of a word (ܢ). The remaining figure (ܢ) is also a final Noon as appears after a letter that it could not connect to.
22 Technically pronounced "Alaha", which is simply Eloah/Elohim in this Aramaic dialect.
23 Aramaic pronunciation of yodh-sheen-waw-ayin, or Yay-shoo-wah, in Hebrew.
24 This Aramaic word means something closer to "awe/fear" rather than the Greek translation "godliness". In Aramaic, the awe/fear of YHWH is a righteous act.

Assemblies

Ya'akov (James) stated he was writing to Jews who were scattered *"among the peoples,"* a key divergence from "nations." He addresses Jews who were and are living among, and as Gentiles. In every culture including Jewish, there is distinction made between the people (Israel) and the peoples (everyone else). In this case the phrase b'ammeh literally means "in/among peoples" with the "b" proclitic having these prepositional meanings attached to ammeh. When we say "nation" in English, we envision a fixed place with borders and limits set by treaty and legal convention. While there are surely "peoples" living in these locations for long periods of time, we do not consider the nation dissolved if many were to pack up and leave. By contrast, James is writing to Jews of the dispersion, and his intent is clearly to pull them out from their national ties and have them return to their tribal/ethnic ones.

The reason we can be certain of this has to do with the second term: *"For if there come into your assembly a man with rings of gold or splendid garments, and there come in a poor man in sordid garments"* (James 2:2). Most of the time when Paul, Peter or other Renewed Covenant writers address a group of believers, they use the term ***eidta***, the Greek equivalent is ***ekklesia*** which refers to a body of people. This term is closest to the Hebrew term ***adat***, *usually* "congregation" in English (Exodus 12:3), which is indicative of a general gathering of believers.

However, in spite of its Hebrew counterpart having strong usage in Tanakh, the fact of the matter is that adat/eidta or ekklesia is a later concept that emerges in the letters of Paul and others in the Renewed Covenant. A more primitive and direct word is *knooshta* which James uses, usually translated as "assembly"; it is also the word from which the Israeli Cabinet, or *Knesset* (assembly) is derived. Knooshta is the original word from which the Greek word synagogue was derived. Ya'akov then is not only writing from his *Beit Knesset* (synagogue), but is sending his letter to Jewish believers among the nations about their Beit Knessets which must, by virtue of their taking instruction from James, be Netzarim: Torah observant Believers in Y'shua Mashiyach.

What we have then is nothing less than an international network of "synagogues" comprised of believers in Y'shua Mashiyach. These "houses of meeting" as evidenced by the letter sent out from Jerusalem in Acts 15, are clearly comprised of both Jews and Elohim Fearers (Gentile proselytes) who worship together, just as their conventional Israeli counterparts (Acts 10). The letters also serve as powerful proof that Ya'akov was the Rosh Beit Din (head of the Beit Din) in Jerusalem, the overseer of all legal matters affecting the worship of Jews and Gentiles alike, regardless of their location.

The "assemblies" are meeting places where the Ruach haKodesh is invited and welcomed; a place of studying the Word of YHWH, prayer and all form of worship, which facilitates education and emulation of Torah values for the common good of the community. Karaites use the term *Kenesa*, which is derived from Aramaic to denote "Beit Knesset," but the modern Yiddish term *shul* that is commonly used for a synagogue, comes from the German word for school.

Netzarim Assemblies existed as a recognized people group up until 400 CE; however, heavy opposition from both Christian and Rabbinical sources forced them underground. There are rapidly increasing numbers of people today who are interested in returning to the Netzari Faith and, in most cases, they come from either Christian or traditional Jewish backgrounds. However, whether they remain in or leave traditional religious institutions, their calling is to observe Torah and preach Mashiyach. Whether Jewish or not, Israel and her seed are they *"who keep the commandments of Elohim, and have the testimony of Y'shua"* (Revelation 12:17). This unified covenant exemplifies the Faith that is upheld by all Netzari Assemblies.

A survey of Peshitta Primacist scholarship
19th and early 20th Century

"The material of our four Gospels is all Israeli[25] and the language in which it was originally written is Aramaic, then the principle language of the land."
C.C. Torrey, *Our Translated Gospels*, p. ix (1936)

Precious few Bible students have researched the Peshitta Aramaic text on their own volition; most have relied on the commentary and opinions of others. Among some who are counted as "scholars" there are those who were unable to discern the difference between Eastern Aramaic originals and the Western Aramaic-Serto texts with which they have become most familiar; and even up to the present, most conventional resources reflect bias toward the more modern Western Aramaic traditions. But up until a century ago, many scholars studied the Aramaic texts to recognize the discoveries that are revealed in this publication. Unfortunately, many modern scholars have no knowledge of who these former scholars were; neither do they understand the importance of their discoveries.

Many scholars disregarded the ancient testimony about the originality of the Peshitta text, while "replacing" reliable traditions with their own theories that later became discredited by successive scholars. Such was the case with Burkitt's hypothesis on Rabulla of Edessa being the author of the Peshitta, when in fact Rabulla wrote Old Syriac instead. These issues are discussed at length in numerous publications and online studies by Andrew Gabriel Roth. Dr. Charles Cutler Torrey, one of the most capable Peshitta scholars, has already weighed in with his assessment of the Peshitta in the opening quote.

In 1843 Dr. Asahel Grant, a missionary and physician to Aramaic assemblies in Babylon, published a definitive work on the Church of the East based on his travels throughout Iraq, which he called *The Nestorians or Lost Tribes*. Additionally, while explaining his thesis, Dr. Grant also came away with some very important observations about Peshitta traditions. Then, in 1889 William Norton published a masterpiece on Peshitta Primacy called: *A Translation in English Daily Used, of the Peshitto-Syriac Text, and of the Received Greek Text, of Hebrews, James, I Peter and I John*. All his quotations are taken from this key resource. Norton also frequently quotes from many sources including Dr. Grant, but the overall treatise is from Norton's pen. Unless Dr. Grant or the other sources are specifically indicated, the reader should assume it is Norton, who is referencing them. What follows then is a topical organization from these sources.[26]

The Ancient Netzarim (Nazarene) link to the Nestorians

The original followers of Y'shua Mashiyach were referred to as Netzarim, while the Nestorians, who preserved the Peshitta text, were better known as the Church of the East. "Nazareans is a term very commonly employed by themselves and others to designate the Nestorians. It is never applied to other Christian sects. The term Nazareans has been well defined to mean Christians converted from Judaism...who adhered to the practice of the Jewish ceremonies…Jerome speaks of them as Hebrews believing in Christ. We have good reason from Acts xv.5, to believe that the Gentiles never adopted the rites of the Jews, nor the name of Nazareans, to whom these rites were peculiar. It must then have been applied exclusively to the Jewish converts. Hence, the conclusion that the Nestorians must have been Jews. (Grant, p. 153-4)

The Connection between Hebrew and Syriac (Aramaic[27]) as the languages of the Tanakh and NT Scripture

Syriac was the native tongue of Syria. There were two territories called Syria; one to the east, the

25 Where 19th Century scholars have referred to Israel as "Palestine" and Israelis as "Palestinians," we have restored all such occurrences to "Israel" and "Israelis."
26 Emphases within quotations are not the original writer's.
27 Whenever "Syriac" is used, "Aramaic" is intended.

other to the west of the Euphrates. The capital of Syria, west of the Euphrates, was Damascus. In 2 Samuel 8:6, *"The Syrians of Damascus"* are mentioned. Before the ten tribes were carried captive into Assyria, the kings of Syria had reduced them to long servitude (2 Kings 8:12; 10:32; 13:4-7). Dr. Grant suggests that this tended to change the language of the ten tribes from Hebrew to Syriac. (p. 147)

Syria, to the east of the Euphrates included the important city called Edessa. Bar Hebraeus, a very learned Syrian of the Thirteenth Century, said: "Of the Syriac language there are three dialects. Of these the most elegant is the Aramaean spoken by the inhabitants of Edessa and Haran, and Syria the Exterior," that is, Syria in Mesopotamia. (Walton's Poly. Prol. xiii. 4; Asseman's Bibliotheca, Vol. I., p. 476)

G. Amira, a Syrian of note, and the author of a Syriac Grammar, made a statement that indicates how widely the Syriac language was used in that he was "able to define the Syriac or Chaldaic tongue to be that which was born, and had chief rule in the East; which could alike be called Assyrian, Babylonian, Aramaean, Hebrew, or Christian; since it was known by nations of those names, and used by them." (Wichelhaus on N. C. Peshitto, p. 21) Walton also, in his Polyglot, (Prol. xiii. 2) says that the language in which the books of the Old and New Covenants exist in the east, and which to-day is called Syriac, "has been called Chaldaic, Babylonian, Aramaean, Syriac, Assyriac, and even Hebrew." The dialect in which the Chaldeans spoke to the king of Babylon, Dan. ii. 4; and that in which Rabshakeh, the Assyrian, was asked by the elders of Israel to speak to them, Isa. xxxvi. 11, are both called in those passages, Aramaean, a name which includes different Syriac dialects. (Norton, page 8)

On the general regard in Israel of non-Semitic languages as the proper vehicle for sacred Scripture

"Prof. Neubauer provides many reasons for his belief that ***'few Jews in Israel had a substantial knowledge of Greek.'*** One of them is that 'no events had occurred which could have made Greek prominent in Israel,'" (Norton pg. 62); that no nation ever makes so great a change in its language as to adopt "a totally different" one, unless the conqueror transports the greater part of the inhabitants, and introduces foreign colonists who are far more numerous than the remaining inhabitants; and that the Greeks had never this superiority of numbers in Israel (pg. 64). He says that few Greek words occur in the Jewish writings such as the Mishnah, the Targums, and the Talmud of Jerusalem; that "no apocryphal book, as far as our knowledge goes, was composed in Greek by an Israeli Jew," (pg. 65); that so far as he can judge, "all that the Jews in Israel learned of Greek was at most a few sentences, sufficient to enable them to carry on trade, and to hold intercourse with the lower officials; and that even this minimum certainly ceased after the Maccabean victory over Antiochus Epiphanes; because it was the interest of the Asmonean Princes to keep the Jews aloof from the influence of the neighboring dialects" (pg. 66).

"Professor Neubauer concludes that those Hebrews who lived in cities occupied chiefly by Greeks, "may have acquired a fair knowledge of conversational Greek, but not to such an extent as to enable them to speak it in public" (pg. 67). He says that even those Jews of Egypt and Asia Minor who spoke Greek, maintained a connection with the mother-land by going to Jerusalem for feast-days; and that "we may infer that they all still spoke, more or less, their native Hebrew dialect, because no mention is made of interpreters being required for them either in the temple or outside of it" (pp. 62, 63).

The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures that was made in Egypt and existed before the New Covenant writings; but Prof. Neubauer says, "we may boldly state that this Greek translation of the Bible was unknown in Israel, except to men of the schools, and perhaps a few of the Hellenistic Jews. It is said in the Talmud that when the Greek translation of the Seventy appeared, there came darkness upon the earth, and that the day was as unfortunate for Israel, as that on which the golden calf was made" (pg. 67). The fact that the Jews at Jerusalem

who spoke Greek are called HELLENISTS, that is, GRECIANS, in Acts vi. 1, and ix. 29, shows that their Greek speech made them a peculiar class quite distinct from the rest of the people. (Norton, page 13)

Evidence for Aramaic supremacy in Israel derived from traditions preserved in the Greek New Testament

"The Greek Scriptures record some of the exact words used by Jesus. Many of these are words which were used only in Syriac dialects. This fact is often referred to as proof that Christ spoke in Syriac. Bishop Walton, in the 13th of his Prolegomena, section 19, says, *There are many purely Syriac words left in the Greek NT, which cannot be explained without a knowledge of Syriac*; as *raca*, Matt. v. 22; *momuno*, riches, vi. 24; *bar de yauno*, son of a dove, xvi. 17; *kurbono*, offering, Mark vii. 11; *shebakthonia*, thou has forsaken[28] me, Matt. xxvii. 46; *benai regesh*[29], sons of thunder, Mark iii. 17; *talitho kumi*, Damsel, arise, Mark v. 41; *khekal demo*, the field of blood, Acts i. 19. Many others occur in Acts v. 1; ix. 36; John i. 47; 1 Cor. xvi. 22, --*moran etho*[30] our Lord has come]; and elsewhere. Indeed Jesus, the name of our Lord, is Syriac for Savior; the name *Messiah* is also Syriac, meaning Anointed.....The writers of the New Covenant first made known the heavenly words to the Jews, and to other surrounding populations in this their native tongue, and afterwards wrote in the Greek language, but in doing so retain everywhere a flavor of Syriac." Prof. Neubauer says, with reference to 1 Cor. xvi. 22, written to Greeks, "Is not the watchword[31], *Moran etho*, [our Lord has come], which passed to Greek-speaking populations, a sufficient proof that the speech of the first Christians was Aramaic," (pg. 54). A still more decisive proof that it was so occurs in a remark made by Luke. He, guided by God's Spirit, said that the word *akeldama*, (in the Peshitto *khekal demo*), the field of blood, was part of the language commonly used in Jerusalem. There is no such word as *khekal*, field, in Ancient Hebrew. ***The only languages in which Castle, in his Lexicon of the six related languages: Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Samaritan, Aethiopic and Arabic, says it occurs, are Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic. It does not occur in Gesenius's Lexicon of ancient Hebrew. When therefore Luke says--"And it became known to all the dwellers in Jerusalem, insomuch that in their language that field is called akeldama, that is, the field of blood," (Acts i. 19), we have infallible proof that the Syriac language was the language of Jerusalem.*** (Norton, page 14)

Preservation of the Peshitta traditions by this community from Apostolic times and the accuracy of their liturgy and Scripture

Concurring proofs seem to make it certain that these Nestorian Christians received the gospel from some of the apostles; that there has been a succession of them from that time to this; ***that their copies of the Peshitto-Syriac Scriptures are derived from copies received at a very early date; that they have been carefully made and preserved, and are of great value in determining the true text and meaning of God's word.***

A similar settlement to that in Coordistan, of Christians and Hebrews dwelling near to each other has also existed from the time of the apostles until now, in Travancore and the Malabar Coast of India. These Christians, as well as those of Coordistan, use the ancient Peshitto-Syriac Scriptures in their worship at the present day. They believe they have had these Scriptures from before A. D. 325, in which year their bishop signed his name at the council of Nicea. ***There is ancient testimony that the Gospel of Matthew in Syriac was left with them by the apostle Bartholomew,***

28 See footnote on Matthew 27:46.

29 These transliterations are from Western Aramaic, not the original Eastern Aramaic used in this diglot. As a result, the words here have the western –oh sound on the last syllables, not the more ancient –ah sound that the Eastern has. The letters in Aramaic are exactly the same; it is merely a pronunciation variant due to dialect and changes over time and place.

30 Again, Western emphasis of Aramaic pronunciation is very evident here, as the original Eastern version is well known as *Maran atha.*

31 Neubauer here seems to be echoing a point I made in Ruach Qadim, again not knowing of this scholarship in advance of my own opinions. In Ruach Qadim I called Maran atha the "distinguishing mark" that Rav Shaul refers to elsewhere, a code to authenticate his manuscripts for the local assemblies as having legitimately come from his pen.

and that the apostle Thomas preached the gospel among them. The Hebrews, to whom these Apostles preached, must have been settled there at a still earlier period.

Dr. Asahel Grant said of the Christians of Travancore, "They may be, in part at least, a branch of the present Nestorians of Media and Assyria. We have good evidence that they were formerly of the Nestorian faith, though they have more recently become connected with the Jacobite Syrians. It is worthy of inquiry whether they have not traditions, rites, customs, or other evidence of Jewish origin" (pg. 155). "That the apostle Thomas preached in India, we have the testimony of numerous Greek, Latin, and Syrian authors quoted by Asseman in his Bibliotheca Orientalis, vol. iv., pp. 5-25, 435." (Grant, pg. 156, note. Norton, p 5)

Eusebius says that in the reign of Commodus (A. D. 180-192), Pantaenus, a Christian who had been a philosopher, went as an evangelist from Egypt as far as India; and was said to have found there "the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew," that is, in Syriac, then called Hebrew, "among some who there knew Christ; to whom Bartholomew[32], one of the apostles, had proclaimed Him." Dr. Buchanan says that these Christians now possess the Peshitto-Syriac Scriptures of both covenants in writing; that they believe they possessed them "before the year A. D. 325" (pg. 118); that "they have preserved the manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures incorrupt" (pg. 124); and with such care that in one written copy which he saw, "the words of every book are numbered." (pg. 118)[33] (Norton, page 7)

The errors of Westcott, Hort[34] and others who supported the fraudulent manuscripts known as Old Syriac

Drs. Westcott and Hort published in 1881, six years after Dr. Westcott's fourth edition of his work on the Canon, dated 1875, a long and mysteriously made introduction to a new Greek text full of strange changes. Both editors are responsible for the principles, arguments and conclusions set forth in this introduction, but it was "written by Dr. Hort." (Intro. pg. 18)

The following suggestions made by the above-mentioned people are founded wholly on imagination, without one word of proof. "The popular Peshitto version, till recently, has been known only in the form it finally received by an evidently authoritative revision.....An Old Syriac must have existed as well as an Old Latin. Within the last few years the surmise has been verified. An imperfect Old Syriac copy of the Gospels, assigned to the fifth century, was found by Cureton among MSS. brought to the British Museum from Egypt in 1842, and was published by him in 1858." This is assumed by the writers to be the Peshitto "in its original form," and is said to "render the comparatively late and revised character" of the Peshitto, "a matter of certainty" (pg. 84). Upon this dream of the imagination, continued references are made to the Peshitto as "not coming up to the requirements of criticism," etc. (Norton, pp. 84, 92, 136, 156, 158-159)

Sadly, "false witnesses rose up against" the teachings of Mashiyach and his disciples. But it must be deemed an alarming proof of the diseased state of biblical criticism if we find even leading men indulging not only in wild fancies, but even in false accusations against the most truthful of witnesses.

The late Dean Burgon in his work, "The Revision Revised, 1883," pp. 273-278, said in reference to these conjectures: "Not a shadow of proof is forthcoming that any such recension as Dr. Hort

32 The Gospel of John calls this disciple Nathanael, whereas the Synoptics use his surname, Bar Tulmay (the son of Tulmay), which is later corrupted in Greek as "Bartholemew." Many ancient Eastern and Western traditions, though, insist this must be the same man, primarily because we cannot get a list of twelve apostles as mentioned by all four Gospel writers without doing so. All other double-names (e.g. Shimon-Keefa) of the apostles are referenced between the Synoptics; this is the only disciple who is referred to exclusively by one name in the Synoptics and the other in John.

33 This last fact is extremely important, as it shows that the Aramaic NT scribes employed similar methods that the Jewish sopherim did in ensuring perfect transmission of their Scripture. Hebrew and Aramaic letters are also numbers, and so by recording the numeric value of whole lines, words or letters, we can be certain that the text is fixed.

34 Westcott and Hort are the two scholars most responsible for developing the most widely accepted critical edition of the Greek New Testament.

imagines, ever took place at all." He has, "firstly, assumed a 'Syrian Recension;' secondly, invented the cause of it; and thirdly, dreamed the process by which it was carried into execution."

After reminding Dr. Hort that Bishop Ellicott has said that, "It is no stretch of the imagination to suppose that portions of the Peshitto might have been in the hands of the Apostle John," Dean Burgon said, "The abominably corrupt document known as 'Cureton's Syriac,' is by another bold hypothesis, assumed to be the only surviving specimen of the unrevised version, and is thenceforth invariably designated by these authors as the Old Syriac."

"Not a shadow of reason is produced why we should suppose, first, that such a Revision took place, and secondly, that all our existing manuscripts represent it." "These editors even assure us that 'Cureton's Syriac' renders the comparatively late and 'revised' character of the Syriac Vulgate," i. e., the Peshitto "a matter of certainty. The very city in which it underwent revision, can, it seems, be fixed with 'tolerable certainty.' Can Dr. Hort be serious?"

These painful details are given for the double purpose of guarding the reader, first, against wrong conclusions as to the Peshitto itself; and secondly, against placing confidence, without due examination, in the conclusions of the most influential critics of the day. The habit of substituting mere conjecture for proof is far too common with respect to the Peshitto. (Norton, page 24)

Other evidences to the Peshitta's ancient origins

A manuscript of the four Gospels in Syriac, bearing the date A.D. 78, is mentioned by J. S. Asseman, in his Bibliotheca. The manuscript was preserved at Baghdad on the river Tigris; at the end it had these words under written; "This sacred book was finished on Wednesday, the 18th day of the month Conun, in the year 389," that is of the Greeks, which was A. D. 78, "by the hand of the Apostle Achaeus, a fellow labourer of Mar Maris, and a disciple of the Apostle Mar Thaddeus, whom we intreat to pray for us." This prayer implies that the statement was written after the time of Achaeus (who is probably the person called also Aggaeus), and Dr. Glocester Ridley says that Achaeus died A. D. 48. For this and other reasons J. D. Michaelis says that the statement "is of no authority." (Marsh's Michaelis, 1823, vol. ii., pg. 31)

The great number of converts made by Thaddeus, needed to be supplied immediately with written divine records in Syriac, to teach them what to believe and what to do. Greek books would not have been suitable, for their language was Syriac. The ancient Syriac copy of "The Teaching of Thaddeus," from which the above extracts are taken, states that not only King Abgar, and many of the people of that city, were converted, but many also throughout "all Mesopotamia, and the regions round about it." It says that Thaddeus "received all those who trusted in the Anointed, and immersed them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit of Holiness"; that the king gave money with which a house of worship was built; that in it they "offered praises all the days of their lives;" that in the worship conducted there, the teachers "read in the Old Covenant and in the New, and in the Prophets, and in the Acts of the Apostles every day." By the New Covenant seems to be meant the Gospels; for the New Covenant is distinguished from the Acts of the Apostles, and a little afterwards it is said that many people assembled from day to day, and came to the prayers of the service, and the [reading of the] Old Covenant and of the New in four parts. (Syriac, pp. 13, 15)

The Syriac of this narrative is like that of the Peshito itself; a fact which corroborates the statement that the Peshito was made by the care of Thaddeus.

Some doubt, however, attaches to some of the above statements, because, "The Teaching of Thaddeus" has at the end, received forged additions. Dr. Glocester Ridley says that Achaeus (sometimes called Aggaeus), a disciple of Thaddeus, died A. D. 48.

Serapion was bishop of Antioch about A. D. 192-214; Zephyrinus was bishop of Rome 202-217. Yet in this record it is said that when Aggaeus died, "Palut received the hand of priesthood from

Serapion, bishop of Antioch, which hand Serapion received from Zephyrinus, bishop of Rome, from the succession of the hand of priesthood of Simon Cephas." Although the above extracts do not seem to be corrupted, some of them may be.

Bardesanes was a Syrian writer of note in the Second Century. Cave says that he flourished about A. D. 172. Dr. Nathaniel Lardner, in his Credibility, 1735, vol. ii., pg. 673, says, "Eusebius speaks favourably of him, though most later writers call him a heresiarch." Eusebius says that he was "a most eloquent writer in the Syriac language"; and that he "wrote several dialogues in his own language against Marcion and other authors of different opinions." (See Eusebius' Hist., Cent., iv., ch. 30) Also that he was at first a follower of Valentinus, and that though he gave up some of his errors, he did not get rid of all the filth of his former heresy. Epiphanius says that he was a native of Edessa and very intimate with the king then reigning there, who was also called Abgar, and a professed Christian; that Bardesanes "went into several great errors but continued to use the Law and the Prophets, both the Old and the New Covenant, joining with them some apocryphal books." (Lardner ii. 677-678) This is evidence that at that time a Syriac "New Covenant" existed. Canon Westcott says also of the controversial writings of Bardesanes that they "necessarily imply the existence of a Syriac Version of the Bible." (On the Canon, pg. 237)

Hegesippus lived in the latter part of the Second Century. Eusebius, bk. iv., ch. 22, says, "He sets forth some things from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and from the Syriac, and from the Hebrew dialect as his own, showing that he was one of the Hebrews who had trusted. Dr. Westcott (on Canon, pg. 238) says, "This testimony is valuable, as coming from the only early Greek writer likely to have been familiar with Syriac literature." The bare reference of Hegesippus to "the Syriac," leaves it uncertain to what part of the Scriptures in Syriac he referred; but it shows that he made use of some Syriac copy, and the Peshito is the only one which can be supposed to be intended.

Aphraates, a Persian sage, wrote twenty-two Syriac homilies, A. D. 337-345. The citations from the gospels met with in these homilies, are said by Professor Wright to be very loose; to have some occasional resemblance to Cureton's Syriac, but to be on the whole, much nearer to the text of the Peshito. (Scrivener's Int. pg. 323, note.)

Ephraem, of Edessa, was a very eminent Syrian writer. He died A. D. 373. J. S. Asseman devotes 140 folio pages to extracts from his writings, and to comments on them. They are in the same Syriac dialect in which the Peshito is written. Dr. Westcott (on Canon, pg. 238) says, "Ephraem treats the version in such a manner as to prove that it was already old in the fourth century." One of Ephraem's similes will show the beauty of his style, and though it does not prove that he believed the New Covenant Peshito to have divine authority, yet his constant use of it seems to imply that he was referring to it when he spoke of the New Covenant as a harp, the notes of which have been played by the finger of God. He said, "Praise be to the Lord of all, who framed and fitted for himself two harps, those of the Prophets and of the Apostles; but it is the same finger which has played upon the two, the different notes of the two covenants." (Asseman's Bib. Or., vol. i., pg. 103) (Norton, pages 29-30)

Read almost any encyclopedia or commentary on the New Testament, and you are bound to come across a reference to Rabbula (died 433 A.D.), the Monophysite "Tyrant of Edessa", supposedly "suppressing" the Diatesseron - which they claim was the "earliest" gospel in Aramaic. If we are to believe that, then how does one explain the following subscription to an Arabic translation of the Diatesseron made in the 11th century by the Church of the East?

"Here endeth the Gospel which Tatianus compiled and named Diatessaron, i.e., The Fourfold, a compilation from the four Gospels of the holy Apostles, the excellent Evangelists (peace be upon them). It was translated by the excellent and learned priest, Abu'l Faáraáj ÔAbdulla ibn-at-Tayyib (may God grant him favour), from Syriac into Arabic from an exemplar written by Isa ibn-Ali' al-Motatabbib, pupil of Honain ibn-Ishaq (God have mercy on them both). Amen."

A little history is in order here. This is from an Arabic translation of the Diatesseron made by Ibn-at-Tayyib (died 1043). He is a well known man, a Church of the East monk and scholar who was secretary to Eliyah I, Patriarch of the Church of the East (c.f., Ciasca's Introduction, p. xi. f. and Steinschneider's *Polemische and apologetische Lit. in Arabische Sprache*, pp. 52-55). Honain ibn-Ishaq (also mentioned in the subscription) was a famous physician, a member of the Church of the East who is well known for his contributions to modern medicine.

Of this Arabic translation today we have 7 manuscripts which survive. Four of them happen to contain the subscription above. The most well-known manuscript is called the "Borgian" and it currently resides in the Vatican Library (and is listed in the Ante-Nicene Fathers series.)

So here we have a translator living in the 11th century (a full 600 years ***after*** Rabbula died) who plainly states that he translated the Syriac (Aramaic) Diatesseron into Arabic.

Notice, also, that this is the only translation of the Diatesseron which explicitly states that it was made from the Syriac (Aramaic). No other manuscript makes this claim (not the Latin nor the Armenian.)

Also, notice that the Arabic harmony begins with John 1:1, which we know to be a trademark of Tatian's harmony (c.f., bar-Salibi (12th century in Bib. Or., ii., Volume I pp. 59) who states "Its commencement was, 'In the beginning was the Word.'"

But I thought Rabbula "suppressed" the Diatesseron? At least the dated material in encyclopedias and commentaries state this. In fact, these are the words of Rabbula, verbatim: Rabbula wrote: "Let the presbyters and deacons give heed that in all the churches there be provided and read a copy of the Distinct Gospel," i.e., not the harmonized or mixed gospel.

The truth of the matter is: while it's possible that Rabbula had the power to suppress the Diatesseron in his little corner of the world called Edessa (in Byzantine territory), that hardly gives him the power to extend into Persia and destroy their copies of the Diatesseron.

The subscription to a 600-year later Arabic translation of the Aramaic Diatesseron proves that Rabbula did not suppress the Diatesseron - at least not in Persia where the Church of the East reigned independent of him and his maniacal rantings.

This Arabic translation so *exactly* matches the Peshitta against the so-called "Old Syriac", that F.C. Burkitt found it necessary to make the unfounded charge that the text of the Arabic translation must have been tampered with to make it read like the Peshitta. (c.f., Burkitt, Evangelion de-Mepharreshe (2 Vols; Cambridge; University Press, 1904, 1.200)

In Burkitt's worldview, the Peshitta couldn't have existed before Rabbula's time - so the Diatesseron (created ~175 A.D.) couldn't *possibly* read like it against the so-called "Old Syriac." All this accusation, by the way, without a shred of evidence to support his theory (like his "Rabbula created the Peshitta" theory, which has already been disproved by many scholars).

It makes perfect sense that a harmony of the Gospels would necessarily require that the distinct 4 Gospels actually existed prior to the harmony. This is common sense. It makes ever more sense that an *Aramaic* harmony of the Gospels, which Tatian's Diatesseron was, was woven together from the 4 distinct *Aramaic* Gospels.

Of the 3 surviving translations of the Aramaic Diatesseron (Latin, Armenian and Arabic) the Arabic is the only one which was made in a sister Semitic tongue. The relationship of Latin to Aramaic (or even Armenian to Aramaic) is like the relationship of Chinese to English. The relationship of Aramaic and Arabic is well documented, and one is the daughter of the other.

Since the Arabic translation by Ibn-at-Tayyib is the only one we know for sure was made directly from the Aramaic, and since it reads like the Peshitta (so much so that it worried Burkitt), and since we know that a harmony necessitates a base of 4 distinct Gospels from which it must be

drawn - I submit that Tatian's Aramaic Diatesseron was a harmony of the distinct Gospels in Aramaic we currently find today in the canon of scripture we know as the Peshitta.

Occam's Razor is a logical principle which states that one should not increase, beyond what is necessary, the number of entities required to explain anything. In other words, the simplest explanation is usually the best.

The simplest explanation is that Tatian created a harmony of the Peshitta gospels. This harmony existed in Persia until at least the 11th century, when it was translated into Arabic. It then fell out of popular use. This was not a problem - since they had the distinct Gospels in Aramaic from day one. Tatian's harmony was popular at one time in the life of the church - just as any number of contemporary gospel harmonies are popular today. But that doesn't mean that it predates the Peshitta Gospels.

In fact, if we are to believe the textual evidence in the Arabic translation (rather than Burkitt's personal opinion) - the Peshitta Gospels were the base of the Diatesseron which history attributes to Tatian. And this places the Peshitta Gospels at or before 175 A.D.

Ban on the Name of YHWH

Netzari followers of Y'shua, for many reasons, have never subscribed to the rabbinical ban on vocalizing and publishing the Name of YHWH. The very nature of Y'shua as Mashiyach is revealed in his name; through the Name of YHWH Y'shua's followers know that it is the Ruach haKodesh who gave him his authority, which was not of his human soul. The Spirit of Mashiyach is the Spirit of YHWH, and these are One. Y'shua was not vested with all the powers of his Father because Mashiyach is the Arm of YHWH revealed, which means that he serves his Father in everything to do with time and space, whereas his Father is outside of time and space. Y'shua clearly states that there are things that his Father has not revealed to him regarding the End of Days, but there are also many places where Mashiyach shows himself to be a reflection of the Father.

The "Arm of YHWH" provides a picture of Mashiyach being joined to YHWH as the instrument of YHWH to do His bidding. The "Word of YHWH" is a title that was given to Mashiyach, and the Netzarim restored the Name of YHWH accordingly.

The Spirit of Mashiyach is of YHWH and Mashiyach came in the authority of his Father. The titles "Word of YHWH" and "YHWH Tsidkenu" can only apply to Mashiyach; there is no man or *messenger* (angel) who could bear the Name of YHWH in this manner.

"You shall not take the name of YHWH your Elohim in vain; for YHWH will not hold him guiltless that takes His Name in vain" (Sh'mot/Ex. 20:7). This Commandment protects the Name of YHWH against being changed or distorted, or brought to nothing. Netzarim respect this Commandment by not substituting Hebrew or Greek titles in place of the Name of YHWH. As Andrew Gabriel Roth has clearly demonstrated in several publications, the title MarYAH definitively connects the usage of the Name of YHWH from the Tanakh and throughout the *Ketuvim* (writings) *Netzarim*.

Master YHWH was and is the designation that YHWH's Set Apart people have been instructed to refer to Him by. The Name of YHWH carries very specific Messianic insights when revealed with titles such as *Raah* (shepherd), *Yireh* (provider), *M'kaddesh* (sanctifier), *Rapha* (healer), *Nissi* (banner) and *Tsidkenu* (righteousness) which are all revealed to mankind through the Word of YHWH, who is known as Mashiyach. Therefore, contrary to religious opinions the Name of YHWH is Set Apart and to be proclaimed, published and lauded among the nations as the Name of the One True Elohim. *"And these four creatures had, each of them, six wings around it: and within they were full of eyes: and they have no cessation, day or night, from saying: Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh, the Master YHWH, Elohim, the Omnipotent, who was, and is, and is to come"* (Revelation 4:8).

Mainstream rabbinical Judaism decided that because of the sanctity of the Name and the fierce punishment required for abuse and blasphemy of the Name, that they would ban the pronunciation and say "Adonai" instead of the Name of YHWH. "Adonai" was then translated into the Greek "Kurios" which was then translated into the English "LORD." Some have been led to believe that YHWH instructed Jews to stop using His Name, but neither Scripture nor history bears this out. In fact, YHWH removed His Name from those who "profaned" His Name "among the heathen."

"And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of YHWH, and are gone forth out of his land. ***But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.*** *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus says YHWH Elohim; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the heathen, wherever you went.* ***And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which you have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am YHWH, says YHWH Elohim, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.*** *For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land"* (Ezekiel 36:19-24).

The Most High YHWH has a Name that is Set Apart from all other names and He promises that the heathen shall know the Truth of His Name according to His Set Apart Righteous Authority and Will, regardless of what religions have to say about it: *"So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am YHWH, the Holy One in Israel"* (Ezekiel 39:7).

"O YHWH, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is YHWH" (Jeremiah 16:19-21).

Furthermore, Y'shua the Mashiyach did not subscribe to the ban; rather, he proclaimed[35] the Name of YHWH. However, when the teachings of Y'shua were put into the Greek language the theologians of the day readily adopted Greek terms that had previously been used to refer to Greek deities and which were also in line with conventions of the Pharisees within the Greek language.

"I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal" (Jeremiah 23:25-27).

This prophecy is literally fulfilled by a majority of Judeo and Christian religions. The equivalent word for Baal is "Lord," which is traditionally used to replace the Name of YHWH. Baal is used to reference many deities; Christians call upon the "Lord Gawd." There is a place name in Scripture called "Baal Gawd": *"Even from the mount Halak, that goes up to Seir, even unto Baalgad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon…"* (Joshua 11:17). *Gad* (pronounced "gawd" as in the English "god") means troop or fortune which is consistent with many Christians' belief that their God provides "good luck" and many carry "lucky" images of Mary, Jesus, angels, crucifixes, etc.

"Therefore hear ye the word of YHWH, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my Great Name, says YHWH, that my Name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, Adonai YHWH Chai. Behold, I will watch over

35 In addition to the obvious evidence in the Aramaic text there is also a story in the Talmud about Y'shua healing in the Name of YHWH.

them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs. And this shall be a sign unto you, says YHWH, that I will punish you in this place, that you may know that My Words shall surely stand against you for evil" (Jeremiah 44:26-29). It is a religious normative practice today to reference the name of "the LORD" to endorse all manner of false theology and lifestyle, which is also why YHWH removed His original Set Apart Name from the religious status quo in former times.

"But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt" (Ezekiel 20:8-9).

Although there are clear prophetic directives that YHWH removed His Name because of rebellion, He also promises to reveal His Great Name in the acharit hayamim (latter days). When Mashiyach Y'shua entered Jerusalem in the final days of his life, the people declared: *"Blessed be he that comes in the name of YHWH: we have blessed you out of the house of YHWH"* (Psalm 118:26). The Name of YHWH was openly declared by those who recognized Y'shua as YHWH's Mashiyach. This infuriated the Pharisaic elite because their authority had been brought to nothing. In Matthew 23:39 Y'shua states, "I say to you that you will not see me from now on until you say, *'Blessed is he who comes in the name of Master YHWH'* indicating that a faithful remnant will return to the Ancient Paths within the Renewed Covenant and be awaiting Y'shua's return as Mashiyach ben David.

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of YHWH shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, and to the house of the El of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the Torah shall go forth of Zion, and the word of YHWH from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of YHWH of Hosts has spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of YHWH our Elohim for ever and ever" (Micah 4:1-5).

"I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests" (Zephaniah 1:4).

"Then they that feared YHWH spoke often one to another: and YHWH hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared YHWH, and that thought upon His Name" (Malachi 3:16).

Basar Echad or Polygamy?

Exploring Sexuality According to the Scriptures

As everyone knows, the Torah teems with stories of men who married several women: Kings David and Solomon, for example, along with many of the patriarchs. Using these illustrations, some modern day rabbis and pastors are teaching the false premise that YHWH condoned adultery, or more specifically, polygyny (the state or practice of having more than one wife or female mate at a time). An in-depth study of the Scriptures, however, reveals quite the contrary!

Basic information and definitions:

1) Adultery happens when either the husband or wife in a marriage takes a second sexual partner to themselves, whether the third party is single or married to another person.

2) Adultery is avoided if the husband takes his second sexual partner also as a wife while the first wife lives, but is guilty of it if he has sexual relations with a woman who is betrothed or married to another man. In this scenario the women must remain monogamous but the men do not.

From these two definitions we will also ask the following questions:

1) Which definition of adultery was the original one as defined by YHWH at the creation of man?

2) Was there a time when both definitions according to Scripture could have been valid?

3) Were there warnings in Scripture that these choices were going to change and/or revert back to the original definition of adultery, whatever it may be?

4) Is there absolute proof as to which definition is binding today?

With these ideas in mind, let us begin then at the beginning:

They shall be one flesh

"So YHWH Elohim caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then YHWH Elohim made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ***The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*** *The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame"* (Genesis 2:21-24).

The first question one needs to ask is: If plural marriage was the original model why was only one wife made for Adam?[36] Why not two, ten, or twenty? After all, if Adam was supposed to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth with his descendants, wouldn't multiple wives for him make this task easier?

We will be looking at the way the Renewed Covenant deals with this precise verse a little later on. For now, let's focus on phrases like *"united to his wife"* and *"they will become one flesh."* We see here that woman is formed out of man's body and therefore the act of sex in a sacred context reunites man and wife physically as well as spiritually. In that same way a man can be

36 Obviously I have just renounced the rabbinic tale of Adam having a first wife named Lilith. However, even if we were to consider the lore of Lilith, the point still stands since the legend states that Lilith abandoned Adam to join the Evil One. When she did that she was in violation, and Adam was free to take Eve as wife since Lilith had dissolved the marriage by adultery. It is also worth noting that since the divorce would have been proper for Adam in that particular case, YHWH subsequently gave him Eve to fill the world with his descendants. The same can be said of Noah, who had but one wife during and after the Flood.

said to have gone astray from his first wife by marrying another, as Malachi explains in graphic terms here:

> *"Have we not all one Father? Did not one Elohim create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another? Judah has broken faith. A detestable thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem:* ***Judah has desecrated the sanctuary YHWH loves, by marrying the daughter of a foreign god. As for the man who does this, whoever he may be, may YHWH cut him off from the tents of Jacob--even though he brings offerings to YHWH Almighty****. Another thing you do: You flood YHWH's altar with tears. Y ou weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. You ask, "Why?"* ***It is because YHWH is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her****, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.* ***Has not YHWH made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth****. "I hate divorce," says YHWH, Elohim of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says YHWH Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith. You have wearied YHWH with your words. "How have we wearied him?" you ask. By saying, "All who do evil are good in the eyes of YHWH, and he is pleased with them" or "Where is the Elohim of justice?"* (Malachi 2:10-17).

Clearly *"the wife of your youth"* refers to the only and original wife, as long as she is alive. To take another is, in Malachi's pronouncement, to literally abandon YHWH. True, here the prophet is drawing an analogy between idolatry and infidelity, but the template of that example is still one man, one wife. When Judah marries another daughter who was previously a single maiden, he betrays his first wife! Furthermore, any man need only ask his own wife how she would feel about him taking a second spouse under the guise of "righteousness." This obviously would not go over well in most households, and that being the case, and how then is the first wife honored and cherished when wife number two moves into her house? Malachi's passionate question then, *has not YHWH made them one*, is directly on point. There is also proof that, according to Rav Shaul, the wife has total power to stop her husband from seeking carnal pleasure from any other source:

> *"And concerning the things of which you wrote to me, it is praiseworthy for a man not to approach a woman. But, on account of sexual temptation, let each have his own wife and let a woman have her own husband. And let the man render to his wife the kindness which is due; and so also the woman to her husband.* ***The woman is not the sovereign over her body, but her husband: so also the man is not the sovereign over his body, but the wife. Therefore, deprive not one another****, except when you both consent at the time you devote yourselves to fasting and prayer; and return again to the same disposition that Satan does not tempt you because of the passions of your body"* (1 Corinthians 7:1-5).

If the wife rules the husband's body, it stands to reason she has quite a say in what he does with it, and vice versa.

At this point, as uncomfortable as it might be, we cannot ignore the delicate subject of the physical aspects of intercourse between a man and wife. What is not commonly understood is that sex is required in a marriage. Sex itself is the mechanism that allows a man to leave his mother, a woman leave her home, and the two to be united in the flesh:

> *"Don't you know that your bodies are the members of the Mashiyach? Will one take a member of the Mashiyach, and make it the member of a harlot? May it never be!* ***Or don't you know, that whoever joins himself to a harlot, is one body (with her)? For***

> ***it is said, the two will be one body.*** *But he that joins himself to our Master (Y'shua), is with him one spirit. Flee from sexual sin"* (1 Corinthians 6:15-18).

Therefore, and in contradistinction to the idea that men according to Tanakh can now have multiple wives and not be counted as adulterers, it remains a fact of biology that the two women in such a union cannot unite their flesh in the same way one man and woman can. That is also one reason among many why homosexuality of every kind is condemned in the Scripture. If the two wives then cannot unite in flesh, then the marriage unit itself is not united in flesh either, and is therefore invalid. Also consider: Once the flesh between one man and one woman is united, how can another come and be one with it?

Much of the controversy on this idea, of course, concerns the word for "one" in Hebrew, *echad*, because it can sometimes allow for a compound unity of a plurality of things becoming one. While this is true, we need to look at some other basic facts. First of all, 99 percent of the time *echad* means just one. Even in Israel today, you would say *echad* when you meant "only" or "just one." The alternative word that means "only one" all the time – *yachid* – is extremely rare and not the normal phrase for "one" either in ancient or modern Hebrew.

Second of all, paralleling the male-female union is the creation pattern itself, where evening and morning in Genesis 1:5 form the "greater yom" of day one.[37] Five more individual sets of days and nights are similarly joined after this, in unity. Let's see what Y'shua had to say about this issue:

> *"And the Pharisees drew near to him there, and were tempting him and saying, "Is it Lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause?" But he answered and said to them, Have you not read, that He who created from the beginning, He created them male and female? And he said, Because of this, a man will leave his father and his mother and will be joined to his wife, and they will be both of them one flesh. Henceforth, they will not be two, rather one flesh. Therefore, what Elohim has united, man should not separate. They said to him, "Why then did Moshe command to give a letter of divorce and to put her away?" And he said to them,* ***Because of the hardness of your heart, you were allowed to put away your wives. But it was not thus from the beginning. But I say to you that he who leaves his wife without a charge of adultery, and takes another, commits adultery. And he that takes a divorced woman commits adultery.*** *His disciples said to him, "If such is the difficulty between husband and wife, it is not worthwhile to take a wife.* ***But he said to them, Not every man can apply this word to himself, but only he to whom it is given.*** *For there are eunuchs who were born thus in the womb of their mother. And there are eunuchs who became eunuchs by men. And there are eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let him comprehend who is able to comprehend"* (Matthew 19:3-12).

Y'shua is talking about the original marital arrangement that YHWH intended: As long as the first wife lives and is faithful to her husband, any other wife is to be considered an adulterous partner. He is reiterating YHWH's command that, unless the first wife commits adultery, a second partner after a valid first marriage with a living spouse is always considered adulterous!

Another consideration is this: What if the man doesn't "leave" his first wife per se, but simply allows another wife under his roof while taking care of both of them? The answer is here:

> *"Blessed are all who fear YHWH, who walk in His ways. You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus is the*

37 Some opponents will no doubt counter that in other places large congregations are counted as *echad* as well when they gather together or when they speak with "one voice". However, that does not translate anywhere into a paradigm of sexual relations between husband and wife. The point is that such gatherings collectively form the symbol of the "bride", a singular female, to either YHWH or His Son Y'shua, and this imagery makes no sense whatsoever if multiple wives are involved.

man blessed who fears YHWH. May YHWH bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem, and may you live to see your children's children" (Psalm 128:1-6).

This is the idealized picture YHWH demands: A monogamous family passing on its virtues through the generations as was the case in the beginning. And so the next important question to ask in this study can be summed up in two words:

What happened?

The Tanakh makes it clear that monogamy was the original paradigm for the married state. However, by the time of the Patriarchs, it seems that polygamy – or more precisely, polygyny – was pandemic. What happened in between?

There are only two possibilities: Either YHWH made some temporary concessions for marriage, or both models were acceptable at the same time. If the latter is the case, we must determine whether or not the two methods are both still acceptable marriage modes for us today.

Therefore, let's take a look at the genealogy in Genesis: According to Genesis 4:19, the first man to take two wives was Lamech, a descendant of Cain, who confessed to his wives that he had killed two men in cold blood (verse 23), even as his ancestor Cain, who killed his own brother Abel, was the first murderer. Is this the kind of family that we really want to draw examples of proper moral behavior from? Is their template of intimacy between male and female the one we should emulate for all time? Think about it, because Scripture says that's where it came from.

Instead of a righteous choice then, this was the introduction of perversion into the Scriptural record that would force compromises away from the original Set-apart model. As we move forward, we see that only Cain's progeny continued this practice for many hundreds of years and it is from here that evil nations were born that would later corrupt the seed of Seth, who was the progenitor of a more righteous race. **But it was only the line from Seth right on down to Noah that was monogamous, and it was only that lineage that was spared from the Flood**![38]

After the deluge, Noah's three sons began re-populating the world and, for a time, the lineages of Shem, Ham and Japheth continued in exclusive monogamous practice for at least ten generations, into Awraham's day. But at this point, all *gehenna* seems to have broken loose for a variety of reasons, as a terrible precedent began to be set:

> *"Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, "YHWH has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May YHWH judge between you and me." "Your servant is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her"* (Genesis 16:1-6).

So we see this "experiment" – Lamech's Folly we will call it – that began in the belief of necessity, actually backfired! Instead of bringing reassurance that the tribal lineage would continue, the opposite happened. Sarai and Hagar became bitter enemies and Awraham later was forced to eject

38 Genesis 6:1-2. As you go through Genesis 5, notice that the ten generations that went from Adam but away from Cain's line were all monogamous marriages. Furthermore, it was the adultery with Cain's daughters that was given as one of the principle reasons that YHWH shortened man's life span and sent the global flood to destroy him. It is also no coincidence that the man whose family line was spared, the sole righteous man in that generation, also had only one wife!

this same "security" – namely Hagar and her son Ishmael – straight out of the community they were supposed to help! The result is that four millennia later the children of Isaac and Ishmael remain at war with one another even to this day. So, in the first two polygamist/polygynist "tests" the result was utter failure and mass murder!

> *"The Messenger added, "I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count." **The Messenger of YHWH also said to [Hagar]: "You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for YHWH has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers."** She gave this name to YHWH who spoke to her: "You are the Elohim who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me." That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered. So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael"* (Genesis 16:10-16).

Worse than that, we can also see that, even though YHWH allowed this plural marriage to happen, it really only came about from a lack of faith in His promises:

> *"After this, the word of YHWH came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward." But Abram said, "O Sovereign YHWH, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus**?" And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir." Then the word of YHWH came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir."** He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars--if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." Abram believed YHWH, and he credited it to him as righteousness"* (Genesis 15:1-6).

A son coming out of Awraham's body, as YHWH put it, could only mean through Sarai, the only wife he had at that moment! Furthermore, YHWH saying that "your servant won't inherit" should have been a huge hint that YHWH preferred Awraham not take Hagar as a wife. Later on YHWH gets even more specific:

> *"Elohim also said to Abraham, "**As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her." Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old?** Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?" And Abraham said to Elohim, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!" Then Elohim said, "**Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.** And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. **But my covenant I will establish with Isaac**, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year." When he had finished speaking with Abraham, Elohim went up from him"* (Genesis 17:15-22).

So we see here that not even faithful Awraham could believe his wife would bear him a son, let alone be a mother of nations, apparently because he didn't totally understand what was being promised to him. As a result of failing this test of not just faith but pursuing the ultimate intent of the revelation he was given, Awraham would have to face a much more frightening trial to see if he would sacrifice his own son Isaac! This is clear from the text, since YHWH only then said basically: "Now I know you really believe me!" Sarah didn't do much better in the faith department, either, as the following scripture shows:

> *"Then YHWH said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son." Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already old and well advanced in years, and* ***Sarah was past the age of childbearing. So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?"*** *Then YHWH said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for YHWH? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son."* ***Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But he said, "Yes, you did laugh"*** (Genesis 18:10-15).

We see also here another dimension to this critical juncture. YHWH had given Awraham a choice: Believe that somehow He would make an elderly couple have a male heir, or use "worldly wisdom" to second-guess YHWH and not believe in His Power, and go around His original intentions. But, because YHWH was determined to keep His favor with Awraham to bless the rest of the nations, He gave him another chance and proceeded with those intended blessings once it was clear Awraham finally understood. However, the bad choices of Awraham and Sarah initially forced YHWH to make certain concessions for a time that would take almost two millennia to rectify, as our next section shows.

The temporary compromise

As stated above, the practice that began with Cain's descendant Lamech grew so widespread that YHWH wiped those people out with a flood. However, it is clear from the genealogical records in Genesis 10 that the sons of Ham were the first to go astray spiritually. Cush, Ham's eldest son, was the father of Nimrod, whose people would build the Tower of Babel in an early challenge to YHWH's authority. Another son of Ham, Mizraim, gave his name to Egypt, a well-known early center of polygamy. Yet another son of Cush, Canaan, gave birth to an equally perverse polygamist group that YHWH would later vomit out of the land, and all these would be surrounding the ancient Hebrews wherever they went!

As a result, Awraham, who hailed from these same areas in Ur and Hebron, was bound to have some of this polygamist ideology seep into his thoughts, making it that much easier for him to listen to Sarah's suggestion over YHWH's.

The dilemma that YHWH faced was enormous: If he cut Awraham off for his lack of faith/understanding then His whole plan would go awry, but if He didn't, YHWH had vowed to bless *all Awraham's descendants with nationhood and prosperity, whether they had pure origins or not.* The answer, then, was to bless all the clans that came from Awraham's loins but to reserve special status for the intended lineage through Isaac in matters of special purity and inheritance in Canaan, later to be known as Israel. It would also be YHWH's intention that Israel would teach the other nations around her, but unfortunately the opposite happened and Israel became corrupt.

Then, as YHWH predicted to Awraham, his people would go to Egypt and eventually become enslaved – once again, in a society where polygyny was the norm. Complicating matters, by the time of their emancipation under Moshe, the Hebrews had grown into what Exodus 12:40 calls *erev rab*, a mixed or multi-racial multitude, among who were no doubt other polygynists!

Because the entire nation had to leave quickly then, there was no time to try to separate those engaged in plural marriages from those who were in monogamous ones. Instead, Moshe had to accept the current state of his population that was following him into the wilderness. He would have deal with them first and try to make the best legislation for all concerned later on. That is why you get some Scriptures that read like this:

> *"If a man has two wives, and he loves one but not the other, and both bear him sons but the firstborn is the son of the wife he does not love, when he wills his property to his sons, he must not give the rights of the firstborn to the son of the wife he loves*

in preference to his actual firstborn, the son of the wife he does not love. He must acknowledge the son of his unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father's strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him" (Deuteronomy 21:15-17).

Since the plural marriages were already in his midst, Moshe didn't want to add to the problems he was already having with a discontented populace who kept pining for Egypt by taking children away from their mothers. The tumult that would have arisen there, in combination with the all too familiar record of the backsliding multitude, would have put the entire redemption plan in jeopardy.

But didn't Moshe have two wives himself?

"Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. "Has YHWH spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And YHWH heard this. (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.) At once YHWH said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out to the Tent of Meeting, all three of you." So the three of them came out. Then YHWH came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the Tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When both of them stepped forward, he said, "Listen to my words: "When a prophet of YHWH is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of YHWH. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" The anger of YHWH burned against them, and he left them" (Numbers 12:1-9).

When polygamists try to prove their case scripturally, this is often one of the first places they come to. Their argument goes something like this:

1) Moshe only has one wife listed by name, Tzipporah, the daughter of Jethro.
2) Tzipporah's death is not recorded anywhere from the time she marries Moshe to the opening moments of this verse and therefore she must be alive at this time.
3) Now, instead of his Midian (Arabian) wife, Moshe has taken a total foreigner from Cush, which can mean Ethiopia.
4) Therefore, Moshe has two wives at the same time: Midianite Tzipporah and this unknown Cushite wife here.

There are a few fatal flaws to this sham argument: First of all, Tzipporah's death is unrecorded, period! Therefore, if this Cushite is in fact another woman, there is no reason to suppose that Tzipporah has not passed on, especially given the fact that Moshe is already well past 80 at this point. Secondly, Cush was not confined to Ethiopia:

Numbers 12:1-9 MIRIAM'S AND AARON'S SEDITION
an Ethiopian woman--*Hebrew,* "a Cushite woman"--Arabia was usually called in Scripture the land of Cush, its inhabitants being descendants of that son of Ham accounted generally a vile and contemptible race. The part that Miriam and Aaron had against Moses was the great change made in the government by the adoption of the seventy rulers [Numbers 11:16]. ***Their irritating disparagement of his wife (who, in all probability, was Zipporah [Exodus 2:21], and not a second wife he had recently married) arose from jealousy of the relatives, through whose influence the innovation had been first made (Exodus 18:13-26),*** while they were overlooked or neglected. Miriam is mentioned before Aaron as being the chief instigator and leader of the sedition. (Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible)

As a result, the much stronger case can be made that this is simply Tzipporah being called a derogatory name. Moshe's sister was considered a prophetess and his brother Aaron was high priest. They were clearly used to running the show and being the stars of it. But now, although the inciting incident is not recorded, it is easy to see how Aaron and Miriam would be more jealous of Tzipporah than they would against some pretty young thing that just came on the scene without power; reason being, Tzipporah's father is also a kohen of the most high El (Exodus 3:1), and Mount Sinai where they all received the Ten Commandments was in her backyard! It is certainly the case that Jethro gave Moshe counsel that Moshe did not take from others (Exodus 18:14-27), thus perhaps nursing a long-standing jealousy between the two religious groups attached to Moshe that served YHWH. Whichever the case may be, this text does not prove Moshe was a bigamist. One can only arrive at such a conclusion through a series of false assumptions and erratic leaps away from logic.

So when did the perversion end?

As mentioned earlier, the end of the tolerance of plural marriage was about a thousand years after Moshe's time. YHWH would have to wait for an appropriate time when circumstances would essentially allow Him to press a kind of re-set key for the re-constitution of the nation of Israel from the ground up. But first, Israel would have to pass through its Monarchy period where, in addition to all these cultural cross-currents of history, we must add other traditions that allowed royalty to enjoy multiple spouses:

> *"Later when the anger of King Xerxes had subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what he had decreed about her. Then the king's personal attendants proposed, "Let a search be made for beautiful young virgins for the king. Let the king appoint commissioners in every province of his realm to bring all these beautiful girls into the harem at the citadel of Susa. Let them be placed under the care of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let beauty treatments be given to them. Then let the girl who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti"* (Esther 2:1-4).

Like the King of Persia, Israelite kings Dawid and Solomon kept multiple wives, concubines and harems. Sometimes this was done to showcase their prosperity. At other times it was strategic to quell dissent both from within and beyond the borders of Israel. Whether we like it or not, these examples of polygyny were considered normal for Eastern kings (e.g. Ecclesiastes 2:1-11), which may be why the Monarchy period is completely contained during the period that plural marriages were tolerated by YHWH. On the other hand, Moshe foresaw this trending as well and still did his best to limit its damage even if the secondary marriage was a remedy against war:

> *"The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for YHWH has told you, You are not to go back that way again. He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold"* (Deuteronomy 17:16-17).

Now while pro-polygynysts can argue that "not multiplying wives" can still allow a few extra ones, provided the numbers don't get excessive; the fact remains that Moshe was looking well beyond his days, and attempting to rein in the royalty who was engaging in polygyny. As Solomon himself would discover, the foreign wife that brings you peace today may very well lead you away from YHWH tomorrow.

In any case, while monogamy has always been held in high esteem throughout the ages, we don't see the Scriptural record turning back to it and away from plural marriages until the main prophetic period, when voices like Isaiah and Jeremiah would frequently compare YHWH as a husband fettered to an unfaithful wife that was either Israel or Judah:

> *"During the reign of King Josiah, YHWH said to me, "Have you seen what faithless Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and under every spreading*

tree

> *and has committed adultery there. I thought that after she had done all this she would return to me but she did not, and her unfaithful sister Judah saw it. I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and committed adultery. Because Israel's immorality mattered so little to her, she defiled the land and committed adultery with stone and wood. In spite of all this, her unfaithful sister Judah did not return to me with all her heart, but only in pretense," declares YHWH"* (Jeremiah 3:6-10).[39]

Jeremiah's rebuke is as sharp as it is sweeping, encompassing events for the past two and a half centuries. In 722 BCE, "faithless Israel" was taken into captivity by the Assyrians essentially because the Northern Kingdom's deep idolatry was counted by YHWH as "spiritual adultery". But Jeremiah himself would live to see an equally great catastrophe befall the remaining Hebrew kingdom of Judah, as the Babylonians came in and burned Solomon's temple also to the ground.

The comparisons of idolatry with adultery, then, which permeate the writings in this period obviously make no sense without a one man/one woman template to hang them on. The same can also be said in the Renewed Covenant where the faithful are now portrayed as the Bride of Mashiyach.

The toleration for plural marriage clearly ended when the Hebrews were allowed to return to the Land under Ezra and Nehemiah. At that point, in about 515 BCE, YHWH really could start over with them and set things right. Whereas before Moshe had been forced for reasons of expediency to deal with the plural marriages from the mixed multitude that came up from Egypt, under Ezra and Nehemiah YHWH could use his people's eagerness to return as an incentive to finally get rid of those foreign wives that confused them:

> *"And on the twentieth day of the ninth month, all the people were sitting in the square before the house of Elohim, greatly distressed by the occasion and because of the rain. Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have been unfaithful; you have married foreign women, adding to Israel's guilt. Now make confession to YHWH, the Elohim of your fathers, and do his will. Separate yourselves from the peoples around you and from your foreign wives." The whole assembly responded with a loud voice: "You are right! We must do as you say. But there are many people here and it is the rainy season; so we cannot stand outside. Besides, this matter cannot be taken care of in a day or two, because we have sinned greatly in this thing. Let our officials act for the whole assembly. Then let everyone in our towns who has married a foreign woman come at a set time, along with the elders and judges of each town, until the fierce anger of our Elohim in this matter is turned away from us"* (Ezra 10:9-14).

With these preparations now in place, the entire nation of Israel could finally start fresh and return to the original monogamous model of marriage that Torah demanded: One man and one woman exclusively united to one another in flesh and spirit. From this point on there is not a single mention of bigamy being tolerated in Israel, including the time of Y'shua and the early Netzarim movement. For those reasons, the words of Y'shua that we quoted in the beginning bear repeating now:

39 This quote appears to suggest that both kingdoms of Judah and Israel were equally wedded as separate and legitimate wives unto YHWH; however, that was never the case. YHWH gave rulership to Solomon's line from David; Jeroboam (the northern kingdom's first ruler) was not even remotely related to Solomon. Jeroboam attempted to prohibit access to the Temple for his subjects because he feared it would give the Judahite king (the rightful heir Rehoboam) unfair leverage, and this was followed by a curse against his entire line (1 Kings 12:25-13:34). The northern kings were always viewed as illegitimate by YHWH, and their "certificate of divorce" specifically came about because they had engaged in idolatries before and after separating from the Davidic dynasty. When they rejected YHWH's anointed, they inadvertently excluded their rulership from the redemptive promises of YHWH, but the people themselves were not collectively held culpable (unless, of course, an individual chose to reject the true faith). It was YHWH's choice to bring them back under the banners of David and Solomon (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:24-27). Much like the promises of all believers regardless of ethnicity (which would be given two millennia later), the righteous are collectively considered to be one bride - as were Israel and Judah.

"Because of the hardness of your heart, you were allowed to put away your wives. But it was not thus from the beginning. But I say to you that he who leaves his wife without a charge of adultery, and takes another, commits adultery. And he that takes a divorced woman commits adultery."

The Return of Monogamy is in the KHADs

As referenced in the beginning of this essay, much of the discussion on this topic has centered on the use of *echad*, the Hebrew word meaning "one". In Aramaic, the cognate word is *khad*, and it carries the same meanings. Like its Hebrew counterpart, 99 percent of the time the normative reading is "one/only". The problem that has arisen is that pro-polygamists/polygynists take the one percent of the time that a compound unity is being drawn on and use that as a default usage to pervert plain readings that one wife really does mean just that!

> *"And concerning the things of which you wrote to me, it is praiseworthy for a man not to approach a woman. But, on account of sexual temptation, let each* ***have his own*** (חד) *wife and let a woman have* ***her own*** (חד) *husband"* (1 Corinthians 7:1-2).

The wording "his own" and "her own" derived from Aramaic *khad* (חד), clearly refer to an exclusivity of sexual access between husband and wife. Such a point is even more forcefully made here:

> *"I would that you could bear with me a little, that I might talk foolishly: and indeed, bear with me. For I am jealous over you, with a righteous jealousy for I have espoused you to a* (חד) *husband as a chaste virgin whom I would present to the Mashiyach"* (2 Corinthians 11:2).

The wording here is *l'gabra khad* or "to one husband". This is ***not*** exclusively figurative language. Rather, the spiritual message makes absolutely no sense if it is not built upon the physical monogamous model between husband and wife. After all, there is only one Y'shua for the bride to go to and he is exclusively bound only to the collective "virgin" represented by his followers – and, please note, this is NOT a sexual relationship! Some other verses that show Torah upheld monogamy are as follows:

> *"It is a faithful saying that if a man desires the eldership, he desires a good work.* ***And an elder should be such that no blame can be found in him; and he should be the husband of one wife*** (חד)***, with a vigilant mind and sober and reliable*** *(in his behaviors), and affectionate to strangers, and instructive, and not a transgressor in regard to wine, and whose hand is not swift to strike; but he should be humble and not contentious, nor a lover of money; and one that guides well his own house and holds his children in subjection with all purity. For if he knows not how to guide his own house well, how can he guide the assembly of Elohim?"* (1 Timothy 3:1-5) (See also Titus 1:6.)

And:

> *"It is fitting for men so to love their wives as* (they do) *their own bodies. For he that loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own body; but nourishes it and provides for it, even as the Mashiyach* (did for) *the assembly. For we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones. For this reason, a man should leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife; and the two should be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I am speaking of the Mashiyach and of his assembly"* (Ephesians 5:28-32).

Furthermore we have this important statement:

> *"For there is neither Jew nor Aramean, nor slave nor free,* ***nor male nor female****, but you are all one in Y'shua the Mashiyach. And if you are of the Mashiyach then you are seeds of Awraham and inheritors by the promise"* (Galatians 3:28-29).

The meaning here is simple. If all are one in Mashiyach, including male and female, then the previous accommodations that favored men and discriminated against women in this regard are also abolished, and in fact, have been for some centuries by this time. The dividing wall is gone (Ephesians 2:14-16) and while the roles and functions of men and women will never be identical, neither will they exalt one gender to the detriment of the other in an unfair manner.

Most people understand that YHWH revealed Himself through male and female attributes so that humans could see components of His attributes in the physical world which extend into the spiritual world. YHWH is not a person; He is referred to according to the male gender because He is all the attributes of the perfect Father. However, both the male and female attributes of YHWH point to Mashiyach and are Mashiyach. Mashiyach was born of a woman, and he was the ultimate seed of a woman which, of course, validates the human spirit within an eternal purpose. However, Mashiyach himself stated that the male and female elements of human life are temporal: *"For in the resurrection of the dead, men do not marry women, nor are women given to husbands. Rather, they are as the Messengers of Elohim in Heaven"* (Matthew 22:30). Neither the male or female nature will have relevance in the *olam haba* (world to come), which means they must then ***point*** to the world to come.

Understanding the male and female attributes of YHWH according to Torah and Mashiyach allows men and women to advance toward the *Perfection* of Mashiyach. When a husband and wife are married and joined together in Mashiyach they become *one*; the sum of the two is neither male nor female, but *echad*, one. This new entity of *one* portrays the perfection of the spiritual body that is in harmony with YHWH. Marriage is a covenant that is made in Mashiyach and witnessed by YHWH and all the wedding party for the purpose of bringing the *will* of YHWH from heaven to earth (Genesis 1:28).

Man and woman as husband and wife together rebuild what was lost by original sin and subdue the enemy who, of course, is on a full-time mission to rip their marriage apart and then turn the children from obedience to rebellion. Marriage is clearly the single largest contributor within the human race to loving and belonging to one another! Marriage also pictures each person's love and belonging to Mashiyach as the "bride of Mashiyach," as footnoted earlier.

When a husband and wife individually press into the things of Mashiyach they are conformed into the Image of Elohim as their unique male and female attributes are merged into one. From this unity of *one* their children are able to discern and recognize the Image of Elohim because they are literally witnessing and experiencing trust, honor, love, respect, etc. – attributes that are protected by a covenant according to the perfection of Mashiyach and emulated by their loving father and mother.

Therefore, a monogamous relationship is a heavenly-based covenant made on Earth wherein one man and one woman marry once and for life; it is a covenant that thoroughly demonstrates the spirit of Torah according to the high calling of Mashiyach. Polygamy and polygyny, on the other hand, are man-made traditions that elevate the male gender, distorting the balance and harmony that is revealed within YHWH as male and female. Those who seek Mashiyach to endorse their polygamist/polygynist ideas are clearly deficient in understanding the Spirit of Mashiyach.

Conclusion

The "freedom" of the individual to sin has led many down the path of destruction. But the fact is, one can only find true sexual freedom in the security and unity of a monogamous marriage, which includes freedom from the fear that their intimacy and hard-earned goals might at some point be destroyed by their carnality. Unfortunately, some individuals have chosen to cloak their lusts in religious garb, and attempt to "read into" the Scriptures in order to fool themselves and others into believing that YHWH condones multiple partners in a marriage. The Torah, however, proves otherwise. Whether Jewish or Gentile, leader or follower, anyone who perverts the Word

by twisting adultery into a meaningless restriction runs the risk of being condemned. All who engage in, or teach others that polygamy or polygyny is condoned by YHWH are guilty of lying and they will be held accountable before YHWH come Judgment Day! This goes double for teachers who are in turn held to a much more severe judgment (1 Corinthians 6:9; James 3:1). True freedom comes not via the way of Cain, but from intimate Set-apart marital love between husband and wife as equals, which is the bedrock of our civilization.

Beit Din

A *Beit Din* is a Torah requirement for all communities who follow Mashiyach. *Beit* means house, as in the people of. *Din* means judge, contend or plead the cause, as in; *"And YHWH said, My spirit shall not always diyn (contend) with man…"* (Genesis 6:3). Beit Din is a house of "judges," or counselors who contend with all important matters requiring discernment and reconciliation. The role of a Beit Din is to provide wise and effective leadership to the body, to strengthen and protect the sovereignty of each individual, to nurture the qualities of healthy leadership and prevent abusive leadership or individuals from bringing harm to others.

Each Beit Din is comprised of three or more qualified men who are *mighty in Scripture* and *knowledgeable of the power of Elohim* who are able to provide counsel and direction for individuals and the community as a whole. The members of a Beit Din are responsible to seek YHWH's instructions regarding important matters of the congregation. Matters of reconciliation and discipline follow the order as set out in Matthew 18:15-20; verse 20: *"Wherefore two or three are assembled in my name, there I am also among them"* is a reference to the inner operation of a Beit Din. Each member who sits on the Beit Din must be accountable to all others on the Beit Din as well as all members of the congregation.

Those who serve on the Beit Din are distinguished as YHWH's servants based on Torah qualifications: *"Moreover you shall provide out of all the people upright men, such as fear Elohim, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens"* (Sh'mot/Exodus 18:21). These timeless qualifications are established by Torah in addition to, *"Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. And you answered me, and said, The thing which you have spoken is good for us to do"* (D'varim/Deut. 1:13). This makes for a total of seven qualities or attributes.

These seven attributes are further explained (or amplified) by Rav Shaul: *"And so also the deacons should be pure and not speak double, nor incline to much wine, nor love base gains; but should hold the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. And let them be first tried and then let them serve if they are without blame. So also should the wives be chaste and of vigilant minds; and they should be faithful in all things; and they should not be slanderers. Let the deacons be such as have each one wife and guide well their children and households. For they who serve well (as deacons) procure for themselves a good degree and much boldness in the faith of Y'shua the Mashiyach"* (1 Timothy 3:8-13). It is the responsibility of each individual who sits on a Beit Din to ensure they observe the guidelines set forth in Torah and the Renewed Covenant to live by the same standards that they uphold for the rest of the congregation. Those who sit on a Beit Din must be examples of Mashiyach in their conversation and conduct and be able to train up other men in the things of Mashiyach. No one is to place themselves above others; everyone must be accountable for their conversation and conduct.

There are plenty of cases in traditional religious worlds where leaders hide wicked deeds behind "important" flattering titles, and who spurn Scriptural qualifications while maintaining positions as Rabbis, Reverends, Pastors, Priests, etc. However, the Beit Din widens the leadership

responsibilities within each community according to a team of men who are transparent and hold each other accountable to a higher standard. As each congregation grows more men are added, allowing the spiritual gifts to operate through all who participate. Simple cases may be heard by one member of a Beit Din, more difficult cases are heard by additional men, cases with farther reaching implications are heard by regional, national or international Beit Din. Regardless of the complexity of each issue all who sit on a Beit Din are called to go before YHWH and seek His counsel regarding each matter set before them.

The matter of leadership "authority" within each congregation is extremely important to YHWH and guarded by many Commandments within Torah. Each member of the congregation is required to respect YHWH's authority by not endorsing hierarchal leadership who establishes themselves as their own authority based on their titles, credentials or popularity. The original Shlichim including Rav Shaul never adopted "flattering titles" (Matt. 23:8).[40] Netzarim do not subscribe to unqualified hierarchical leadership, but rather elevate the spiritual qualities and qualifications of individuals according to spiritual fruits:

"Him who is blameless, who is the husband of one wife and has believing children who are no revilers nor ungovernable in sensuality. For an elder should be blameless as the steward of Elohim; and not be self-willed nor hot tempered, nor excessive in wine, nor with hands swift to strike, nor a lover of base gains. But he should be a lover of strangers and a lover of good (deeds), and be sober, upright, kind-hearted, and restraining himself from evil passions; and studious of the doctrine of the Word of Faith that he may be able by his wholesome teaching both to console and to rebuke them that are contentious. For many are stiff necked and their discourses vain; and they mislead the minds of people, especially such as are of the circumcision. The mouth of these should be stopped: they corrupt many families; and they teach what they should not, for the sake of filthy lucre" (Titus 1:6-11).

The very important role of teachers within the community is established and guarded by the Beit Din who are also responsible for the content and teaching methods. The original Shlichim were teachers, yet they were not referred to as "Rabbis." It is important to note that Aramaic in Matthew 23:8 does not mean "Rabbi" as in "teacher" per se, as Y'shua commands his disciples to *teach* the world (Matthew 28). Instead, Y'shua is addressing the more literal "rab," which means "great," as in Genesis 6:5, *"the wickedness of man was **great** on the earth."* Y'shua taught against elitist behavior, therefore; *"do not be called MY GREAT ONE, for you have One that is Great, YHWH."* The prohibition against calling leaders "father" or "Rabbi" is to avoid being entrapped by false religions that give high status or authority to men that is due solely unto YHWH.

Most Christians and Jews openly defy this commandment by preferring to use flattering titles for their leaders, see Job 32:21-12. Isaiah 56:10-12 also exposes leaders who *"can never have enough"* and who keep their "followers" in spiritual and sometimes financial poverty by seeking personal gains for themselves. See also 1 Timothy 4:3. A Beit Din serves to uphold Torah standards and protect the community from insubordinate carnally minded ("wannabe") leaders who are religious career minded men and women who seek large followings and financial support for their own visions. The days in which we live are *"as it was in the days of Noach"* before the flood; therefore, a Beit Din is more essential now than ever before, to protect individuals and congregations from immoral and indecent leaders who are not qualified according to the standard of Mashiyach, but also to raise up righteous leaders who seek YHWH's fullest blessings upon each individual.

40 However, there is a less formal teacher title that Y'shua clearly found more acceptable, that being *malpana* (Matthew 22:36, Mark 13:1, Luke 21:7, John 20:16).

Book of the Torah

The Word of YHWH teaches that Moshe wrote the *"Book of the Torah." "And it shall be, when he sits upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this torah in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear YHWH his Elohim, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them"* (D'varim/Deut. 17:18, 19). Moshe wrote the Torah, and it was first *"before the priests and Levites."* YHWH commanded Torah to be written (Sh'mot/Exodus 34:27). *"And Moshe wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of YHWH: and these are their journeys according to their goings out"* (B'midbar/Numbers 33:2). Torah is not complicated or difficult for the average person to understand; it is provided for everyone. It represents the "character" of YHWH and His values according to His Will and it elevates human life by establishing Justice and Equality for everyone. Torah was revealed to a *"mixed multitude"* of people from every race and creed; however, it was the Jewish people who were given the responsibility to preserve and establish Torah for each generation. *"On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to ba'ar (make plain) this Torah…"* (D'varim/Deut. 1:5). YHWH commanded that after crossing over the Yarden river that the "people of YHWH" *"shall write upon the stones all the words of this Torah very plainly"* (D'varim/Deut. 27:8). This indicates that everyone should have access to Torah, and that according to Torah everyone is responsible to observe and do Torah.

Torah instructs us on how to have a Covenant relationship with YHWH. It contains specific commandments for men only, for women only, for priests and for Nazirites, while other commandments are specifically for the nation; therefore, not all commandments are given to every individual. For those who do not have a relationship with YHWH, Torah might be viewed as a book of do's and don'ts, but in reality Torah is a love letter from a Father to his children that provides instruction and wisdom for life.

Moshe wrote most of the "Book of the Torah" which was successively copied by his descendants. Joshua also wrote in the Book of Torah (Joshua 24:26) and David charged his son Solomon to do *"as it is written in the Torah of Moshe"* (1 Kings 2:4). Jehoshaphat brought a revival to his people after the Book of Torah had been neglected for many years, *"And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the Torah of YHWH with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people."* In 2 Kings 17:37 we read, *"the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he (YHWH) wrote for you, you shall observe to do for evermore; and you shall not fear other gods."* YHWH directed His prophets to write the Book of the Torah as YHWH directed; therefore, it is the Word of YHWH. 2 Kings 22:8 says, *"Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the Torah in the house of YHWH"*; Hilkiah brought revival to his people from the *"book of the Torah of YHWH given by Moshe"* (2 Chronicles 34:14).

"So they read in the book of the Torah of Elohim distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:8). *"And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths and sat under the booths: for since the days of Yeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the Torah of Elohim. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner"* (Nehemiah 8:17-18). The Feast of Tabernacles is a time for everyone to learn Torah; it represents a time when all the nations of the earth will come together in Mashiyach's government and learn of his ways, and walk in Torah. *"And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the Torah of YHWH their Elohim one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped YHWH their Elohim"* (Nehemiah 9:3).

YHWH says, *"Remember the Torah of Moshe my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb*

for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of YHWH: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:4-6). Notice the *"great and dreadful day of YHWH"* refers to the coming of Mashiyach ben David, NOT to Y'shua's first coming as Mashiyach ben Yoseph. Here we can see that the book of the Torah was known in Malachi's day. YHWH instructed us to remember the Torah of Moshe BEFORE the coming of the *"great and dreadful day of YHWH"* till Mashiyach returns again, at his second coming!

"Now concerning the dead who (you say) will not rise, Have you read in the book of Moshe of how from the bush Elohim said to him, 'I AM the Elohim of Awraham and the Elohim of Yitz'chak and the Elohim of Ya'akov. And he is not the Elohim of the dead, but of the living'" (Mark 12:26, 27). Y'shua not only expects the Sadducees to understand the "book of Moshe" but he tells all the people, *"For if only you had believed in Moshe, you would also be believers in me, for Moshe wrote concerning me. And, if you do not believe the writings of that man, how will you believe my words?"* (John 5:46, 47) After Y'shua heals a man from leprosy he commands *"show yourself to the priests, and offer the offering as Moshe commanded, for their testimony"* (Matthew 8:4) which are given in Vayikra/Lev. 13:2, 49; 14:2, and clearly demonstrate that Mashiyach upheld very intricate aspects of Torah.

Y'shua taught that the Word of Elohim came through Moshe: *"For Moshe said to honor your father and your mother, and anyone who reviles his father and his mother, "Let them be put to death!" But you say, "If a man says to his father or to his mother, 'My offering is what you have gained from me'" then you do not allow him to do anything for his father or for his mother. And you despise the Word of Elohim because of the tradition"* (Mark 7:10-13). Here Y'shua is quoting the Book of the Torah from Sh'mot/Ex. 20:12; D'varim/Deut. 5:16 and Sh'mot/Ex. 21:17; Vayikra/Lev. 20:9 and he is upholding Torah but rejecting the traditions of the Pharisees.

After Y'shua arose from the grave, he taught from the Book of the Torah: *"Then Y'shua said to them, Oh fools and of hardened heart and slow to believe in all these things that the prophets spoke! Were not these things necessary that the Mashiyach endure and to enter into his glory? And he did begin from Moshe and from all the prophets and did expound to them about himself from all the Scriptures"* (Luke 24:25-27). From these words we recognize that a foundational understanding of "the Scriptures" is expected of all of Y'shua's followers. Additionally, *"he opened their mind to understand the Scriptures"* (Luke 24:45). Y'shua also levies a stern charge against the Pharisees, *"Did not Moshe give you the Torah, yet not a man among you kept the Torah?"* (John 7:19) This would be a ridiculous and redundant statement if it were impossible to keep Torah and if Y'shua himself didn't keep Torah!

Peter stood up and declared from the Book of Torah, *"For Moshe said [that] A prophet will raise up for you from Master YHWH from your brothers. Hear him like me in everything that he speaks to you, and it will be [that] every soul which does not hear that prophet, that soul will perish from his people"* (Acts 3:22, 23). Peter quotes D'varim/Deut. 18:15, 16 as an authoritative prophetic commandment and Stephen quotes this same passage from the Book of the Torah in Acts 7:37.

The Gentiles who were first being introduced to Mashiyach learned from the Book of the Torah, *"For from ancient generations in all cities Moshe had preachers in the synagogues that on every Shabbat they read him"* (Acts 15:21). This was written for the benefit of those who are not Jewish. The Gentiles were instructed by the leading of the Ruach haKodesh, according to the Book of the Torah to *"abstain from uncleanness of sacrifices (idols) and from adultery and from things that are strangled and from blood"* (Acts 15:20). Mashiyach himself is a continuum of the Book of the Torah, and this continuum extends into the World to Come.

Shaliach Paul (the Apostle) taught the Kingdom of Elohim, testifying of Mashiyach and the Book of the Torah and persuading many souls to believe in Y'shua, *"out of the Torah of Moshe, and out*

of the prophets," from morning till evening (Acts 28:23). Rav Shaul gives a very stern warning when he says, *"For if he who transgressed the Torah of Moshe, died without mercies at the mouth of two or three witnesses; how much more, do you think, will he receive capital punishment who has trodden upon the Son of Elohim and has accounted the blood of his covenant by which he is sanctified, as the blood of all men and has treated the Spirit of grace in an insulting manner?"* (Hebrews 10:28-29) By comparing YHWH's capital punishment from the Torah of Moshe with violations against the *"blood of his covenant"* or against the *"Spirit of grace,"* Rav Shaul clearly teaches that Torah is a Living Covenant.

As Malachi contains an exhortation to remember the Torah of Moshe and keep the commandments of YHWH, so does Revelation close with several similar exhortations including; *"And the dragon was enraged against the woman; and he went to make war upon the residue of her seed who keep the Commandments of Elohim and have the testimony of Y'shua"* (Revelation 12:17). *"Here is the patience of the set apart believers who keep the Commandments of Elohim and the faith of Y'shua"* (Revelation 14:12). *"Blessed are they who do His (YHWH's) Mitzvot, that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city"* (Revelation 22:14).

The Book of the Torah contains the Commandments of Elohim which are a continuum from the time YHWH gave them to Adam and Eve, until the *World to Come*. Mashiyach offered the Renewed Covenant in his blood so that many who accept his offering could open their hearts to YHWH and allow the Ruach haKodesh to write Torah upon their hearts. Those who try to enter the wedding feast but they have no wedding garments are as the five foolish virgins who have no oil; their garments are stained because they willfully chose to break the Commandments and violate the "Book of Torah."

Born from the Beginning

"…if a man is not born from the beginning,
he is not able to see the Kingdom of Elohim." John 3:3

The importance of being "*born from the beginning*" is mentioned from Genesis to Revelation; it is the single most important concept to humanity since Adam and Eve sinned in Gan Eden. Since "the fall," YHWH has required that mankind return to him from a sinful state of thought, speech and action that is contrary to the Perfection of the Image of Elohim. The basic key of being spiritually born anew is found in Jeremiah 31:31-34 as it pertains to the Renewed Covenant, which is why this verse is very often quoted and referred to in Netzarim writings. When we respond to the Ruach haKodesh, our hearts become open to Torah and we are transformed into the Image of Elohim. What this means is, we allow each part of our lives to be sanctified and Set Apart unto YHWH who gave Torah (His Word) to establish and maintain an intimate spiritual connection between Him and us, and to protect us from self destruction. All the forefathers of the Faith experienced intimate spiritual relationships with YHWH and the Word of YHWH, which means they were born from the beginning; they went from living according to the natural man to living in the spiritual, and they returned to their spiritual beginning when man did not know sin.

No one is exempt from the need of being spiritually born anew. The Ruach haKodesh (Spirit of YHWH) prompts each one to return to a life that is pleasing to YHWH, which is healthy for us and our loved ones and beneficial for all people and for our planet. Many souls are driven by idealism, justice, responding to needs of others, or just plain survival after realizing they've been their own worst enemy. Those who have been spiritually born anew come from all levels of religion, intellect, sophistication, refinement, race, cults, witchcraft, sorcery and abomination known to man. There is no "new sin" under the sun; just volunteers for many variations of the same old stuff. Thankfully, YHWH is no respecter of persons. While others may be impressed at the level of reprobation you may have experienced, YHWH isn't. Even if a person credits him

or herself for choosing to be spiritually born anew, the point is that YHWH knows the needs of His people much more than they can understand. YHWH is the one who provides consciousness about the importance of Justice, Peace and Mercy, and we simply respond in agreement by turning to Him (repenting) and seeking His Kingdom.

Mankind is not capable enough to create global Justice and Peace; otherwise we would have already done so. While the majority of people want to see a better world, it's impossible for man on his own to change his sinful disposition. Mankind has corrupted itself and the Earth to such extreme measures that vain souls are now suggesting that they be financed to build another Tower of Babel (rebellion against YHWH) and go to live on other habitable planets. In reality the latest scam is to bring "higher intelligence" back to Earth, to enslave mankind into following a "one-world-government" that has no regard for YHWH or His Mashiyach (Revelation 13:8).

Uncomfortable though it may seem, the only way to be born from the beginning is to pray and wait until our prayers are heard. Of course, souls are born spiritually at all manner of time, place and circumstance; there is no universal formula. It is very helpful to be in fellowship with those who have been spiritually born in Mashiyach, but this is not a prerequisite. There must not be any religious strings attached to becoming "born again." This is not of men but of the Spirit of YHWH. For instance, many religions expect allegiance to their theology and your financial support for helping you to become "born again" – when in reality the ONLY thing that matters is your relationship with YHWH and His Mashiyach.

Y'shua taught in Matthew 18:3, *"unless you change and become like children, you will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."* He was of course referring to the capacity of children to believe, trust and have faith without doubting; and once we learn to walk "in" Mashiyach, he teaches us the things we need to know, which is why the Word of YHWH is so vitally important. When a person is truly "born again" they enter into the Malchut Elohim[41] and can easily distinguish between religion and the things of the Kingdom of Elohim, because *"…the Word of Elohim is living and all-efficient and sharper than a two-edged sword, and enters even to the severance of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow and the bones, and judges the thoughts and reasonings of the heart: Neither is there any creature which is concealed from before him; but every thing is naked and manifest before his eyes, to whom we are to give account"* (Hebrews 4:12-13).

Prayer means communicating with YHWH in the moment just as you are. Whether praying alone or with others, it is your connection to YHWH that is important. If you feel stressed, tense, uncomfortable or awkward, just imagine how Adam and Eve felt after they sinned! Since Adam and Eve, millions have been redeemed from their sin.

The Ruach can also take us by surprise. Some have experienced a new spiritual birth when they least expected it. Rav Shaul, for instance, was on his way to wreak havoc with the followers of Mashiyach when he was stopped in his tracks (Acts 9). YHWH spoke through the prophets to reveal that "today" while we are still drawing a breath, even right at this moment is the "right" time to surrender to YHWH and His Mashiyach. We need to remember, this is on HIS terms, not ours.

In reality, when we feel the need to repent of sin, this is evidence that the Ruach haKodesh is speaking to us and preparing us for the Kingdom of Elohim. The Kingdom of Elohim is spiritual, not worldly or carnal, which is why knowing YHWH is called a spiritual birth; it is new because we enter into a new experience in Him, a new birth. The external factors are not so relevant; however, they are used to try and test: How much do we really value the One who gave us life?

41 In Jewish thought, the Malchut (kingdom) of YHWH is connected with two other terms that translate roughly as "Crown" and "Will". It is very interesting to note that both definitions of the Kingdom are found and described in the NT. Look for the crown concept in 1 Corinthians 9:25, Philippians 4:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 2 Timothy 2:5, 4:8; James 1:12, 1 Peter 5:4 and Revelation 2:10, 3:11. The concept of the Kingdom being defined as direct obedience to YHWH's will is of course mentioned by Y'shua in Matthew 5:17-19, 6:33, 7:21 and elsewhere.

Mankind's creative ways to cope with sin are not working because sin is destroying our earth and its inhabitants. YHWH has given mankind the means to mitigate the destruction, but rather than resist the demons, the majority of humanity (the fallen world) has made a pact with evil. Some pretend that YHWH is unknowable, or that the world was destined to be the way it is, but the fact of the matter is that YHWH Himself says the exact opposite. He says they shall know me, *"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know YHWH: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says YHWH: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more"* (Jeremiah 31:34). The purpose and reason that we have been given life is to know YHWH and serve Him. With life comes the individual responsibility of choice, and whether we accept it or not we each have exercised the power of choice since there is no middle ground.

When a person is spiritually born, they have passed from (spiritual) death to life in Mashiyach and they belong to YHWH, not to institutions of men; their unity is in the Spirit with YHWH and they belong with His people. It's impossible to both simultaneously break YHWH's Commandments and maintain a spiritual connection with Heaven; all manner of unclean thoughts, speech and association with evil become burdensome to one who is born of the spirit. Walking in Faith is a distinct spiritual journey for every soul: *"By faith Awraham, when he was called, obeyed and departed to the place which he was to receive for an inheritance: and he departed while he knew not where he was going. By faith he became a resident in the land that was promised him as in a foreign land; and abode in tents with Yitz'chak and Ya'akov, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for the city that has a foundation of which the builder and maker is Elohim"* (Hebrews 11:8-10).

The biggest obstacle preventing you from returning to YHWH and being "born from the beginning" is you. No one lives or dies solely unto themselves; each of us is part of the "*mystery*" of the Kingdom of Heaven. People have mocked, scorned Mashiyach, some call him a *mamzer* (bastard); others have believed Mashiyach to be a fairy tale when in reality mankind has no other hope of Peace and Justice on this earth, outside of Mashiyach.

Christmas

The vast majority of Christians insist on celebrating the "Christmas holiday" as though it has something to do with the birth of "Jesus" – even though most realize that "Jesus" wasn't born on December 25th and even that the roots of "Christmas" go deep into paganism and nowhere to be found in the Bible. YHWH never suggested we celebrate birthdays, let alone the birth of the Savior who was born around Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) in September of 5 BCE.[42] This Biblical fact debunks the Roman Catholic based December 25th "holiday" and clearly exposes it as an outright lie.

The Word of YHWH foretold that from the *"seed"* of woman would come the Savior of all mankind, and by this seed "the Serpent" would be destroyed: *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel"* (Genesis 3:15).

After the flood when the human race was centralized on the plains of Babylon, haSatan began to turn mankind away from YHWH's plan of redemption by producing a counterfeit Messiah.

42 It is generally accepted in the Netzari community that Y'shua was born on the first day of Sukkot. However, Andrew Gabriel Roth has presented compelling information in his book *Signs of the Cross* (pages 47-95) that pins the Nativity between September 10th and 13th, 5 BCE, or after Yom Kippur but just before Sukkot. One of the arguments is that the Holy Family were sheltered under a sukkah when there was no room at the inn. If all the people of this area around Jerusalem were in their houses or similar permanent structures, then the festival could not have started and everyone would be living outside. With all the inns full the only remaining structures were the sukkahs that had been erected but were not occupied yet. Since the publication of this book in 2001, more details of the mechanisms of this timing have been improved upon, with respect to the priestly service cycles.

HaSatan found an ambitious woman named Semiramis, the widow of Nimrod, he was of course *"the mighty hunter before YHWH"* (Genesis 10:9) who met with a violent death. Nimrod had been deified as the deliverer from the menace of wild animals. His widow sought to perpetuate his worship while also retaining the power of his kingdom, and she deceived people into believing that she gave birth, through a miraculous conception, to a son she named Tammuz (branch) whom she purported to be the reincarnation of Nimrod. 2,000 B.C.E. saw the haSatan's counterfeit to the promised "Seed." Semiramis was thenceforth worshipped as "the mother of god" (Madonna) or "the queen of heaven," and her illegitimate son also became a deity. This is where the ancient Babylonian mystery religion originated, the fountainhead of all idolatry. Every idol, whether mentioned in the Set Apart Scriptures or in Mythology, can be traced to these beginnings.

Alexander Hislop, in his monumental work "The Two Babylons" has shown that papal worship is based on none other than the worship of Nimrod and his wife, disguised in a garb of Christianity. Concerning the Christmas festival Hislop writes: *"That Christmas was originally a pagan festival is beyond all doubt. The time of the year, the ceremonies with which it is celebrated, prove its origin. In Egypt, the son of Isis, the Egyptian title for the queen of heaven, was born at this very time, about the time of the winter solstice. The very name by which Christmas is popularly known among ourselves - Yule day - proves at once its pagan and Babylonian origin. "Yule" is the Chaldee name for "infant," or "little child"; and as the 25th of December was referred to by Anglo-Saxon ancestors as the "Yule-day" or "the child's day", and the night that preceded it, "Mother night", long before they came in contact with Christianity, that sufficiently proves its real character. Far and wide in the realms of paganism was this birthday observed."* (The Two Babylons; Alexander Hislop, p.93)[43]

As mentioned above, it can be clearly demonstrated from Scripture that Y'shua Mashiyach was not born in the winter, but during the Fall Feasts. Since YHWH in no way authorized the celebration of Christmas, not to mention birthdays, what would possess Christians to fabricate a birth date for our Savior? As early as the First Century Rav Shaul rebuked Gentile followers of Mashiyach for attempting to incorporate paganism into the True Faith: *"Then, for when you did not know Elohim, you served those things who, by their very nature, are not Elohim. Now that you have knowledge of Elohim, and especially have knowledge from Elohim, that you have returned to those weak and poor principles, wishing to come under their bondage. You have observed days and months and times and years. I am afraid that perhaps my being among you has been in vain"* (Galatians 4:8-11). Rav Shaul's letters, of course, were not heeded by the Church.

In the year 230 C.E. the Christian Church founder Tertullian wrote: *"By us [Gentile Christians] who are strangers to (Jewish) Sabbaths, and new moons, and festivals, once acceptable to G-d, the Saturnalia, the feasts of January, the Brumalia, and Matronalia are now frequented, with gifts being carried to and fro."*

Moving on, Tammuz was worshipped as god incarnate which implied that he was an incarnation of the "Lord of the heavens." Since the sun grows stronger after the 25th of December, this date came to be known as the rebirth of Nimrod and of the Sun. In ancient Rome this day was known as "Natalis Invicti Solis," the birthday of the unconquered sun. Lights were kindled then to burn until the 6th of January (Epiphany). The week-long feast of Saturnalia was held at the time of the winter solstice, accompanied with much evil revelry and debauchery. HaSatan managed to find masses of gullible and willing men to seduce into believing the lie that these pagan festivals were acceptable to the Almighty, and various "religious men" were instrumental in incorporating them into the Catholic religion. As a matter of fact, it became policy for the papacy to amalgamate heathen festivals with Christendom. Pope Gregory wrote to Augustine

43 "Yule" is also the name of a winter feast practiced by Germanic and Norse tribes where they cooked the last of their meat for the winter. It was also celebrated around the winter solstice and dedicated to their false god Odin, whose appearance bears a striking resemblance to a certain corpulent bearded man in a red suit who is supposed to give gifts to children on Christmas day.

the first missionary to the British Isles (C.E. 597): *Do not destroy the temples of the English gods; change them to Christian churches. Do not forbid the 'harmless customs' which have been associated with the old religions; consecrate them to Christian use.* The Vatican views paganism as "harmless customs" which is why the church is rife with paganism that was syncretized into Greco-Roman Christianity.

Sir James Fraser in "The Golden Bough" writes: *Thus it appears that the Christian Church chose to celebrate the birthday of its founder on the 25th of December in order to transfer the devotion of the heathen from the sun to him who was called the Sun of Righteousness. If that was so, there can be no intrinsic improbability in the conjecture that motives of the same sort may have led the ecclesiastical authorities to assimilate the Easter festival of the death and resurrection of their Lord to the festival of the death and resurrection of another Asiatic god which fell in the same season.* To be appealing to the masses, the early post-apostolic church founders asserted their political and immoral relativism against the Word of YHWH, thus making void the Commandments of YHWH by their pagan traditions.

The term "Christmas" first appeared around 450 C.E. when Pope Julius decreed that all Catholics must celebrate the birthday of Christ at the same time that the heathen were celebrating the pagan Saturnalia feast. It was designated as "Christe-masse" or Christ's mass. Sadly, there are precious few Christians who recognize that the origin of the "Christmas tree" is from Babylon mystery religion as many believe the tree originated among Christians in Europe. But there are even fewer Christians who know this and will actually dare to speak out to warn others against the pagan origins of Christmas.

The decorated tree represents Tammuz (which means a branch); it is haSatan's counterfeit of the true "Branch" – Hebrew: NETZER; a shoot; or a sprout. Mashiyach was prophetically *called "The Root out of dry ground"* (Isaiah 11:1; 53:2; Jeremiah 23:5). *"Behold the man whose name is The Branch"* (Zechariah 6:12). Ancient Babylonian coins pictured a tree stump which represented dead Nimrod and a small tree growing nearby which represented Tammuz. The Egyptians used the palm; the Romans a pine tree. The "Xmass tree" as once worshipped by idolatrous Israelites is described in Jeremiah 10. Mistletoe and holly figured prominently in the early Anglo-Saxon and Druidic tree worship.

"Hear ye the word which YHWH speaks to you, O house of Israel: Thus says YHWH, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cuts a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good" (Jeremiah 10:1-5).

Clearly Jeremiah records a vivid depiction of a tree that is cut down from the forest, erected and decorated for a religious celebration. Ezekiel also shows how YHWH's people sorely grieved Him by adopting the "imagery" of Tammuz which now has become the decorated Christmas tree. *"Then said He unto me, Son of man, have you seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? For they say, 'YHWH does not see us; YHWH has forsaken the earth.' He said also unto me, turn yet again, and you shall see greater abominations that they do. Then He brought me to the door of the gate of YHWH'S house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz"* (Ezekiel 8:11-14).

Part of Tammuz worship was to place golden balls on the tree which were representative of his testicles, as he was also considered a god of sex. The women weeping for Tammuz was a pagan ritual that continued long after he died because his sexual services were no longer available. As one can plainly see, the whole hearted Believer would not contribute to the perpetuation of Christmas in any manner; he or she will withdraw from all pagan-born celebrations revered by

the same evil spirit that tried to slay the infant Messiah by Herod's sword. The blood of the slaughtered babies of Bethlehem cries out against the diabolical hatred toward the infant Savior whom the world hated. Sadly, the world is now racing towards the fulfillment of YHWH's Word, his witnesses shall be slain and *"they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them and make merry and shall send gifts to one another"* (Revelation 11:10).[44]

Christians and all who would follow the Elohim of Awraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov, would do well to act upon Rav Shaul's teachings, a man of truth! *"And have no commerce with the works of darkness which are unfruitful, but reject them"* (Ephesians 5:11). Torah reminds us: *"You shall not follow a multitude to do evil"* (Exodus 23:2). Many think that Christmas isn't a big deal, even though they know it has pagan origins; but Mashiyach states, *"That which is highly esteemed among men is abominable in the sight of Elohim"* (Luke 16:15). Rav Shaul writes; *"And be not conformed to this world; but be you transformed by the renovation of your minds: and discern you what is the good and acceptable and perfect pleasure of Elohim"* (Romans 12:3). All children of Elohim have an obligation to love each other and warn each other against delving into pagan rituals, because this is *not* a light matter, it's impossible to serve two masters.

Circumcision

There are zealots of all religions who "demand a performance" of new converts so they can claim them as their followers. Little has changed in 2,000 years. In the days of the Shlichim circumcision was used as one of these elements of "performance." The Shlichim were clearly unified on the principle of circumcision but the application of when and why brought contention. There were fanatics who pushed for premature circumcision before the candidate understood the important elements of Covenant, while others felt all Gentiles had to be circumcised before they could be part of Mashiyach. Jeremiah 9 specifically states that circumcision in the flesh (because it is a local custom in Edom, Moab, Egypt) does not in itself satisfy Covenantal obligation with YHWH unless a person also lives an upright life which is what establishes his circumcision.

The very same, of course, can be said of "baptism" or "saying the sinners prayer"; both are utterly useless if a person does not turn from their sin and follow Mashiyach, but that's not what false religion tries to make us to believe. False religion has a "salvation pill" – cunningly devised fables that get people "saved" – but all false religions base their authority on one sort of theological elixir or another. There is little point in being circumcised or baptized unless a person demonstrates that the Ruach haKodesh is working in their heart and that they desire to conform their lives to Mashiyach, the Word of YHWH. It was on this simple and basic principle that all the controversy and confusion over circumcision was generated.

Rav Shaul taught that faith and intent of the heart determines whether or not a person is ready to be circumcised and walk in Torah. At no time did Shaul ever teach against either circumcision or Torah; however, he opposed the "traditions of the Pharisees" who demanded blind observance to their religious traditions. Rav Shaul required that Gentile converts be taught about Covenant and have clear understanding of what they were doing in relationship to YHWH and His Mashiyach because, to be expected to know and observe complex *halakha* at early stages of belief was unacceptable. Both the Pharisees and Netzarim taught that a person must study to develop their understanding and establish the intent in their heart before circumcision, rather than to blindly follow the wishes of others. Only a small group of zealots demanded immediate circumcision, which is something Rav Shaul clearly opposed.

It is very evident that Awraham received instruction before his circumcision, and he is the father of Faith for both Jews and Gentiles alike. Awraham was circumcised at age 99 after receiving the commandment directly from YHWH; therefore, each adult also must first be called and agree to

44 Gift giving is also inconsistent with the Gospel narratives in Matthew and Luke. Simply put, the wise man with the frankincense did not exchange his gift with the wise man who brought the gold! They brought offerings to Mashiyach, and therefore it is fair to ask every December "where is Y'shua's gift?"

enter into Covenant with YHWH. Awraham was counted righteous *before* he was circumcised because he had Faith to observe *all* that YHWH commanded. Based on this fact, those who are not as yet circumcised in the flesh but who fulfill and observe Torah, will judge those who are circumcised and know the scriptures well, but yet transgress against Torah. Torah has equal weight; no one can pick and choose what they wish to believe of the Scriptures and still hold themselves to be qualified enough to judge others. One could be physically circumcised (or baptized) and still be a thief, liar, adulterer, murderer, etc.

The whole key to understanding the matter of circumcision is to realize that religious tradition had distorted it into something far different from what YHWH intended. Most Christians tend to blow way out of context *"circumcision is nothing"* (1 Corinthians 7:19), as if that were the message Rav Shaul intended – which is a falsehood because the next part of the verse states, *"neither is uncircumcision; but the keeping of Elohim's commands."* In other words, those who have not been circumcised are no better off than those who are. So, even if neither group is keeping Torah, circumcision itself is still one of YHWH's commandments. Paul says, *"For in Mashiyach Y'shua, circumcision and uncircumcision are nothing, but faith is completed through love"* (Galatians 5:6). He is most certainly not anti-circumcision, but he does speak of "faith that is completed through love," which reveals the intent of the heart to act according to righteousness.

Rav Shaul makes it very clear that those who follow Mashiyach must also fulfill the steps of faith of our father Awraham. *"For he received circumcision as the sign and the seal of the righteousness of his faith while in uncircumcision: that he might become the father of all them of the uncircumcision who believe; and that it might be reckoned to them also for righteousness: And the father of the circumcision; not to them only who are of the circumcision, but to them also who fulfill the steps of the faith of our father Awraham in (his) uncircumcision"* (Romans 4:11, 12).

Being circumcised for justification is a moot point; every student of the Word knows this. But does this mean that non-Jews should be instructed not to be circumcised? No! If they desire to be circumcised they do it unto YHWH; if they choose not, then they choose not to be circumcised unto YHWH; so whether they get circumcised or not, they do it unto YHWH according to His Mashiyach. There is nothing in Scripture to suggest that a person should not get circumcised; however, when they do it, they must do so for the right reasons. Ironically, large numbers of Christians have their newborns circumcised for "health reasons" but most of these same Christians are against circumcision *"as the sign and the seal of righteousness"* of faith. The Christian world has had a very difficult time comprehending that the physical actions of obedience are to come after spiritual convictions (faith) are written upon the heart, and that physical actions of obedience guide the spiritual man away from carnal lifestyles.

"Now I say, that Y'shua the Mashiyach ministered to the circumcision in behalf of the truth of Elohim in order to confirm the promise (made) to the fathers; And that the Gentiles might glorify Elohim for his mercies upon them, as it is written: I will confess to you among the Gentiles, and to your name will I sing psalms. And again he said: Rejoice, you Gentiles, with His people. And again he said: Praise MASTER YHWH, all you Gentiles; (and) laud him, all you nations. And again Isaiah said: There will be a root of Jesse; and he that shall arise will be a prince for the Gentiles; and in him will the Gentiles hope" (Romans 15:8-12). There is certainly no division between Jews and Gentiles here. Instead, Paul makes it very clear that Mashiyach ministered to the circumcision and calls Gentiles to rejoice with *"His people,"* rather than hacking away at the Renewed Covenant and turning it into a license to sin or treating it as though it was originally given to Gentiles.

"What then is the superiority of the Jew? Or what is the advantage of circumcision? Much in every way. And first, because to them were entrusted the words of Elohim" (Romans 3:1, 2).

Romans 1:16; 2:9 and 10 also indicates that Jews were offered the Kingdom first, through the Covenant promise given to Avraham that carried on to Yitzak, Ya'akov and all the Children of Israel, through Faith. Clearly there is only one Kingdom that Gentiles could be grafted into.

"At that time YHWH said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins" (Joshua 5:2, 3).

This act of circumcision in the Name of YHWH separated the Israelites unto YHWH: *"And YHWH said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day"* (Joshua 5:9).

There is only one way to roll away the reproach of paganism from Greco-Roman based Gentile Christianity, and it happens to be the same method as for Jews: Each one must put Faith in Mashiyach Y'shua and let the Ruach haKodesh, by Grace, write Torah upon the heart. By nullifying Torah, the Christian world has become as culpable of transgression as rebellious Israelites, the name "Christian" means to be "Christ-like" rather than simply calling oneself a: _____ (fill in the name of your denomination of choice).

Greek followers of Y'shua who were being trained up by his disciples, were caught between two opposite worlds. They could one day be invited to a *bris milah* (covenant of circumcision) party, and the next, attend a gymnasia event where their uncircumcised countrymen competed in the nude. Circumcision was detestable within Greek and Roman culture, so Jews who participated in the Greek games underwent operations to reverse their circumcision (epispasm). This simply turned these Jews into a laughing stock of those whom they imitated, but this same cultural status quo value also caused Greek-based Christianity to reject circumcision, and spawned theologies that suited their anti-circumcision culture. The Gentile Christians allowed worldly culture to influence their religious choices just as much as the Jewish world let religious traditions override the authority of the Word of YHWH.

Paul never discounted circumcision one bit, but he did enlighten people to the fact that circumcision comes *after* Faith, *after* a person believes, *after* they have made a lifestyle change: *"And the father of the circumcision; not to them only who are of the circumcision, but to them also who fulfill the steps of the faith of our father Awraham in (his) uncircumcision"* (Romans 4:12).

Awraham's physical circumcision came some time after he believed and had faith, so it is with everyone else who puts their Faith in YHWH and His Mashiyach. While Rav Shaul never discounted physical circumcision, he clearly rejected false religious traditions that turned circumcision into a device to micromanage new converts. This principle also applies to forced baptism or conversion, which is a senseless and wicked thing to do to another human being. Nevertheless, circumcision came to be viewed as a "Jewish thing" rather than being honored as an act of Covenant faithfulness toward YHWH.

Circumcision by faith also has a prophetic future component:

"And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant" (Genesis 17:14).

Isaiah then says, *"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean"* (Isaiah 52:1).

Y'shua Mashiyach alludes to these garments in Matthew 22:11 *"And the king entered to see the guests, and he saw a man there who was not wearing the attire of a wedding."*

Y'shua used this parable to teach about his return for his bride: The wedding is the Kingdom of Elohim being brought to Earth, and *Tsiyon* will don beautiful garments, which is referring to the righteousness of Mashiyach within the *Kedoshim* (Set Apart People).

Ezekiel also stated: *"Thus says YHWH Elohim; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel"* (Ezekiel 44:9).

These prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel will be fulfilled in the Millennium when Mashiyach will rule and reign and the whole Earth will shine with the Glory of Elohim, but it also contains a very clear directive for "the stranger," *not* bloodline Israel, who will also be physically circumcised. Therefore, anyone who teaches an ultimatum against circumcision is clearly disparaging the Word of YHWH, the teachings of Y'shua and Paul, and the intent of Torah.

"My brothers, if I then preached circumcision, why was I persecuted? Why? Has the stake ceased to be an offense? Oh that those who are also troubling you would be expelled!" (Galatians 5:11-12)

If Paul had preached the "party line," the Pharisees would have taken him back with open arms. But from the dawn of time – Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel and onwards – every soul on Earth has always been and is being judged according to the intent of the heart, and this will be consistent to the end of time. Neither is there any variance or shadow of turning within the intent of the Word of YHWH; but mankind has a propensity to judge Torah as being unjust or too burdensome when, in fact, it is man who is a burden to YHWH by thinking himself to be wiser, more modern and more refined than the giver of life. If someone, Jewish or Christian, chooses to be circumcised, it is between them and YHWH. It is not up to religious people to judge others or condemn them for what they feel is pleasing unto YHWH. The reality, of course, is that carnal man simply does what is pleasing to himself, and he seeks the Word of YHWH to endorse what is right in his own eyes.

The Renewed Covenant was given to the house of Israel and Judah (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:8), but includes all who join; meaning the Renewed Covenant is not a "Jewish thing" only, nor is there a division between what Jews observe and what "Elohim Fearing" non-Jewish disciples of Y'shua observe. The Kingdom of Elohim is open for all to enter, and we are all called into His Kingdom on His terms, not ours.

Y'shua restored the Ancient Path spoken of in Jeremiah 6:16. The Brit Chadasha (Renewed Covenant) was offered by YHWH so that both Jew and Gentile can fully embrace Torah in Mashiyach. Unfortunately, this isn't always easy because those living among Christians are persecuted for observing Torah and those living among Jews are persecuted for proclaiming Y'shua! Religion is comfortable but Truth demands sacrifice; nothing has changed in 2,000 years. The Shlichim/Apostles did not invite new converts for *brit milah* (covenant of circumcision) without first witnessing that the study-faith context and intent of the heart was established. There is no evidence in the Ketuvim Netzarim that the Shlichim prohibited circumcision of Gentiles; this would have presented an inequality between Jew and Gentile, which is simply not done in Mashiyach. In reality, the Covenant of circumcision was given to mankind as a sign in the flesh to also remind a person that they belong to YHWH and His Mashiyach.

Coequal of Elohim

"…who, as he was in the likeness of Elohim,
deemed it no trespass to be the coequal of Elohim"
Philippians 2:6

The Greek reading of this verse (NASB) is: *"Who did not regard equality with Elohim a thing to be grasped."* But why the difference? The answer is with what Catholic and Protestant churches would later call, "the mystery of the Trinity." Greek almost seems to say: *"I really can't speak for Godhead issues."* Aramaic clearly says it is ***"not blasphemous"*** to grasp this truth. In reality, the divine component of Mashiyach must be understood in the context of the Tanakh. Paul is not "robbing" anything from the Truth which was in place long before his arrival; he declares the Truth which is from the beginning.

By the revelation given him and diligent study of the Tanakh, Paul knows well that Mashiyach is the *"coequal of Elohim."* A very Torah-based concept. Some may counter: "You make a man

out to be Elohim," which is not "Jewish" – which is one of the very reasons Paul is considered apostate from Torah. But who are his critics? Obviously they are the Pharisees of old and their direct spiritual descendants this day, who deny Y'shua Mashiyach in the first place. It's ***not*** the followers of Y'shua who made him out to be Elohim, but YHWH Who put the Spirit of Mashiyach into a human body. It is the omnipotence of the Almighty YHWH which is under attack by those who reject Y'shua as Mashiyach. Critics posture that the Father YHWH, who is ***ein sof*** (without end) cannot indwell a human being, but these critics are simply plying theological limitations upon YHWH's omnipotence.

The issue shifts to not ***if*** YHWH could do this, but ***would*** He do this? In 134 places in the Tanakh, the Scribes (Masoretes) working under authority of the rabbinate removed the Name of YHWH and inserted "Adonai" in many places where the Name YHWH was directly pointing to Mashiyach! Rabbinical tradition was very "inconvenienced" by this very fact (in places like Psalm 110), so they rewrote many verses to suit their own religious traditions.

Aramaic and Greek both state that Y'shua came *"in the image/appearance of the sons of men"* (Phil. 2:7). This is a key point, as it shows that while Mashiyach appears as a man, he is not wholly like other men in all respects. Aramaic reads: *"And He humbled himself and became obedient up to the point of death - the death of the stake. For this reason also Elohim exalted Him..."* (verse 9). If this sounds familiar it should: *"Of the travail of his soul he shall see to the full, even My servant who by his knowledge did justify the Righteous One to the many, and their iniquities he did bear. Therefore I (YHWH) will divide him a portion among the great, And he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he bared his soul unto death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors"* (Isaiah 53:11-12 1955).

Several Hebrew and Aramaic words, each with precise, discreet and subtly different shades of meaning, are uniformly translated into the generic English words *"**soul**"* and *"**spirit**"*. In this case Isaiah tells of the ***nefesh/naphshah*** (life force) that Mashiyach lays down. Obviously the divine attributes in Mashiyach (Isaiah 11:1-2) cannot die. This is important because Elohim can neither bleed nor perish, and yet a portion of Mashiyach is equivalent to YHWH.

Another important Scriptural guide is found here: *"And they shall look upon **Me** (et) whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for **him** as one mourns for an only son" (*Zechariah 12:10). However, the JPS renders this verse, *"they shall look upon Me because they have thrust him through,"* which does violence to the Hebrew, so as to shore up their own traditional religious orthodoxy. Usage of ***et***, as in *"B'resheet bara Elohim hashamayim v'**et** ha'aretz; In the beginning Elohim created **(et)** the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1:1). The key word ***et***, acts as a direct object pointer; its purpose is to point to the part of the sentence that receives the action from another. In this case, the heavens and earth receive the action of their creation from YHWH. This is such a basic and consistent rule that in ***every*** other place ***et*** appears, the direct object is *always* pointing to the phrase after it as the receptor. Granted though in Genesis 1:1 ***et*** appears after heavens but before earth, because it is a compound structure (heavens and earth) and the pointer must in this case appear before the appearance of the latter term. Still, that minor oddity does not prevent JPS translators from telling us rightly where the heavens and earth are receiving their action from, nor does this difficulty arise in any of the several hundred other places in Scripture; however, this passage in Zechariah 12:10 is very controversial in their own eyes.

In Zechariah's case, the placement of ***et*** leaves no doubt whatsoever that it is YHWH receiving the action of piercing, and yet they mourn for ***him*** (Mashiyach) as an only son! This fact alone clearly proves that YHWH is somehow pierced and yet He does not die, but it also shows that His son does! But then if the son can die how is he *"equal"* with YHWH who can never die? The answer lies in understanding the difference between *"equal"* in Aramaic and English. When we say "equal" we mean a sense of equivalence, such as 2 + 2 = 4. However, to say "*equal with*

YHWH" in this context does not mean *identical* but rather "*of the same substance as Elohim*." Water and ice have the same substance but they are not identical; neither does each one do the exact things of the other. Mashiyach is made up of the same "divine" nature as YHWH, but is given a subservient function by the very nature of the fact that he had become human. That is also why he can say "***I am nothing without my Father***" because without the divine component he is just as another man. This of course brings us back to Paul's description of Y'shua having the "*likeness of men and was found in fashion as a man*" (Phil. 2:7).

Conversion

"Truly I say to you, that unless you change and become like children, you will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 18:3

In the religious worlds much energy is put into conversion – becoming a Jew or Christian, or "converting" from one sect or denomination into another. Many are baptized, re-baptized and dedicated, re-dedicated and consecrated and initiated and given all manner of recognition by various peer groups as they jump through the "religious hoops" of whatever religion they have chosen. Unfortunately, many souls don't seem to realize that there is only one conversion that will ever matter when it comes to eternity, and that is to be converted from the carnal man into the spiritual man according to trusting in Y'shua Mashiyach.

Throughout Scripture the burden of change is upon Israel, not upon Heaven. In Matthew 18:3 Y'shua instructs us to change and become like children – teachable, forgiving and trusting. The inner man must change from his personal carnal agendas and be transformed into the "likeness of Elohim," which is a virtual impossibility unless a person has a spiritual relationship with Mashiyach. As in every healthy relationship both parties have unique qualities, experiences, gifts and abilities that they bring into a relationship and so it is that each one of us present ourselves to Mashiyach in a very unique way.

We are made in the "Image of Elohim" which means that there is a portion of the Master inside each one of us, and it is this "point of contact" that allows us to know we have changed and converted and passed from death to life in Mashiyach. It is, however, a fatal error to judge one's conversion on the merits of someone else's experiences or doctrines. Paul explains: *"For we dare not value or compare ourselves with those who vaunt: but they, because they compare themselves with themselves are not wise"* (2 Corinthians 10:12).

Perhaps you've noticed that your own soul doesn't cope well with religious formulas for "conversion" and, of course, this is because you were not created to fit into a man-made mold. If we were to remove all the external factors of conversion, we would be left only with a conversion into *Perfection*. The spiritual man is made in the *Likeness of Elohim* which is Mashiyach, and in this regard each person is called to be a mashiyach. Therefore, that Perfection we all look for in conversion is already planted within us, but we must first take hold of it and then walk in it.

Change is good, but Perfection is better because we are individually created by YHWH according to His Perfection. He will lead and guide. As Yochanan stated, *"And you also, if the anointing which you have received from him remains in you, you need not that any one should teach you; but as that anointing is from Elohim, it teaches you all things; and it is true, and no falsehood is in it. And as it has taught you, remain you in Him"* (1 Yochanan 2:27). In other words you are free in Mashiyach and don't need any "religious baggage," but not free to transgress against your own anointing that sustains your spirit being. Yochanan said: *"And now, my children, remain you in him; that so, when he will be manifested, we may not be ashamed before Him, but may have an open countenance at His coming. If you know that he is righteous, you also know that whoever does righteousness is from Him"* (verses 28, 29).

David's Master

"Therefore, if Dawid calls him Master YHWH, how is he is son?" Matthew 22:45

The Greek Kurios (Lord), and Adon/Adonai, (Master) can easily be applied to either Y'shua or YHWH; therefore, few scholars have noted that the Greek Kurios could mean YHWH in Matthew, and "human masters" in Mark and Luke, as referenced in the Aramaic Peshitta readings. Compare the Aramaic readings of Matthew 22:41-46; Mark 12:35-40; Luke 20:39-47: Notice that Mark and Luke say: *"Dawid, calls Him 'my master'; so how is He his Son?"* But in Matthew: *"Dawid calls Him 'YHWH'; how is He his Son?"* Both Mark 12:39 and Luke 20:39 read: *Some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, You have spoken well." And they no longer dared to ask Him anything. Then He said to them, "How can they say that the Mashiyach is the Son of Dawid?* Matthew 22:41-42 reads: *While the Pharisees were together, Y'shua questioned them, "What do you think about the Mashiyach? Whose Son is He?" "Dawid's," they told Him."*

Compare the differences:

1. Luke says that Y'shua **first** silenced the Pharisees, and **then** asked his question. Matthew says that Y'shua **first** asked the question.
2. Luke and Mark do not provide the Pharisees' initial answer that Matthew includes. In other words Luke and Mark record Y'shua responding to the answer!
3. Luke writes "*no one dared ask him anymore questions*" at the **beginning** of the phrase.
4. But look at Matthew 22:45-46: *"If, then, Dawid calls Him 'YHWH' how is He his Son?" No one was able to answer Him at all, and from that day no one dared to question Him anymore."* Matthew puts "*no one dared ask him any questions*" at the **end**, not the beginning like the others. This is also how it has been translated into Greek. Which version of the story is correct? Both! They are providing accounts of different stages of the same exchange.
5. Mark does not record "*no one dared ask him any questions*" in his narrative. Some suggest that is because his writing style is much more abbreviated than the others; however, Mark frequently includes details that others don't: Matthew: "*while the Pharisees were together*". Mark 12:35: "*while teaching in the temple*". Luke: "*while he taught the people in the temple*".

Let's examine all three accounts:

Matthew 22: *41. "While the Pharisees were together, Y'shua questioned them, 42. "What do you think about the Mashiyach? Whose Son is He?" "Dawid's," they told Him. 43. He asked them, "How is it then that Dawid, inspired by the Spirit, calls Him 'Master' YHWH, for he said: 44. Master YHWH said to my master, 'Sit at My right hand until I put Your enemies under Your feet'. 45. "If, then, Dawid calls Him 'YHWH' how is He his Son?"* (Refers to YHWH's part in Psalm 110.)

Mark 12: *35 "While teaching in the temple, Y'shua answered and said, How do the scribes say that the Mashiyach is the son of Dawid?"* (Refers to Y'shua's part in Psalm 110.)

Luke 20: *39 "Some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, You have spoken well." 40. And they no longer dared to ask Him anything. 41. Then He said to them, "How can they say that the Mashiyach is the Son of Dawid? 42. For Dawid himself says in the book of Psalms: Master YHWH said to my master, 'Sit at My right hand 43. until I make Your enemies Your footstool.' 44. Dawid, then calls Him 'my master'; so how is He his Son?*

Mark and Luke: *"Beware of the scribes, who want to go around in long robes…"*

Matthew, Mark and Luke: *"No one was able to answer Him at all, and from that day no one*

dared to question Him anymore." Same conversation, same event, same day. But the questions are clearly addressed to the two different groups: Group 1, the Pharisees (Matthew); Group 2, the Scribes (Mark and Luke).

The Pharisees emphasize *oral law* (Matthew 23:1-2). The Scribes emphasize *written law* (Mark/Luke). Each group is addressed separately though they complement one another. Each group performs different roles within the same religious structure. Each group requires a unique approach. The questions began with the Pharisees. Y'shua asks, *"What do you think about the Mashiyach? Whose Son is He?"* Y'shua expects them to answer that Mashiyach is "the son of YHWH" as Zechariah 12:10 and many other verses in the Tanakh indicate. The answer provided by the Pharisees relates to the family line Mashiyach is from – which is Dawid – which is also true, but certainly not the whole answer. Then Y'shua quotes Psalm 110 and shows the Pharisees that Dawid knew Mashiyach was YHWH Himself! This not only involves Psalm 110 but also Psalm 2, 8:4-8, 97:7, etc. That is why Y'shua says in Matthew that Dawid spoke *"under inspiration,"* referring not only to Psalm 110. In this context, Y'shua uses MarYah, thus making the point that by being the Word (Psalm 33:6) that made everything (Psalm 33:6), Mashiyach is from YHWH's mouth and therefore part of YHWH! So the question is how and why does Dawid provide such a full account of Mashiyach being YHWH, and yet Mashiyach is Dawid's descendant (the human part of him)?

To the Pharisees he simply inquired of whose son Mashiyach is (as in Matthew 16); then after his dialogue with the Pharisees, Y'shua turns to the scribes to see how they'll make out. But, Y'shua has a surprise; he takes the answer from the Pharisees and turns it into a question for the Scribes. *"Why do **they say** he is the son of Dawid?"* They are scribes after all, and they should know what Dawid wrote, shouldn't they? So, Y'shua says in Luke, *"why does Dawid say in the book of Psalms....."* Different group, different question; so this time Y'shua says, *"Look people! In the Psalms of Dawid, it says that his master is his descendant!"*

Consider also that the scribes give the same response as the Pharisees; they answer that Mashiyach comes from Dawid. But Y'shua (not YHWH) draws the Scribes into the Mari/human master part of the Psalm to make a separate point. That point is that all of Jewish culture points to the Father as the Master and the son/descendant (the word can mean either) as the servant, and yet Dawid calls his future descendant his Master. Y'shua wants them to tell him why. But it seems, all of a sudden they either don't know or don't remember? No, they knew the correct answer, but they found themselves in a very, very "tight spot"! The answer that every Jew knows, is that because the *"son of Dawid"* is destined to be an eternal and universal ruler (as the Psalms and nearly all the prophets indicate), his Eternity is superior to Dawid's mortality, even though he is Dawid's offspring. In addition, this is not the only time that Dawid takes a lower seat than his offspring.

The office of Mashiyach is superior to Dawid's kingship, whether referring to the human or divine components. Mashiyach inherits Dawid's throne and secures additional powers that Dawid could never have (Daniel 7:14, Revelation 3:21). Although Dawid's descendants may look back to King Dawid and derive status and power from their ancestral relationship to him, here it works the other way around. Dawid is most certainly the anointed king of Israel, but his anointing with oil is itself a symbol of the type of power that was to manifest in Mashiyach at a later time (Isaiah 9:7, Luke 1:32)!

Let's also remember that Dawid desired to build the Temple to YHWH, but YHWH would not allow him. Instead, the honor went to Dawid's son Solomon who became even more prosperous and was also wiser than Dawid. Solomon represents a "type" of Mashiyach because he built the Temple. Regarding the building of the Temple, Solomon outdid his father just as Mashiyach outdoes his illustrious ancestor.

Y'shua says: *"and now someone greater than Solomon is here"* (Matthew 12:42). While most assume that this simply means that Mashiyach is wiser and more righteous than Solomon, there

are also additional components regarding the way the Kingdom of YHWH is being manifested. Matthew 12:43-45 gives some context to this by providing a brief discussion about casting out demons, something that extra-Biblical legends give Solomon much credit for. One of the rabbinical legends suggests that Solomon used a "magic ring" to force demons to build the Temple! Others point out that the call Solomon received, even as a child, had to include matters of the spirit:

"Elohim gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. ***Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt.*** *He was wiser than any other man, including Ethan the Ezrahite - wiser than Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom"* (1 Kings 4:29-34).

Legends aside, Scripture bears strong testimony of Solomon's power to conquer unclean spirits; which was something "the men of the East and Egypt" were famous for. The fact that Y'shua speaks about casting out demons points to his superiority over Solomon, and by extension his father Dawid, in all manner of earthly and spiritual power. The scribes and Pharisees, however, are so focused on their Dawid-veneration, that they don't recognize the true symbols and ranking that Dawid himself understood. Yet again Aramaic conveys the original meaning and nuances within Y'shua's original language and culture. In this case, the Greek Kurios could mean either YHWH or Y'shua, which obscures the beauty that MarYah/YHWH clearly reveals.

Definition of Love

Although the Scriptures clearly define love, it has been given all manner of modern definition by various institutions and religions. Most souls think of love according to its attributes because love is rather difficult to define. Many Christians assert that "God is love" and one of the popular clichés is to "just love the Lord." But the manner of how one "loves the Lord" brings up much opinion and debate, especially since Christians often teach a love that is quite the opposite of what Scripture teaches. For example, *"And by this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Elohim and follow his commandments. For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not burdensome. Because, whoever is born of Elohim overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith"* (1 John 5:2-4).

The definition of love is best understood through Mashiyach's life and teachings: *"If you love me, keep my commandments"* (John 14:15); and, *"He who has my commandments with him and keeps them, he is who loves me and he who loves me will be loved by my Father. And I will love him and reveal myself to him"* (John 14:21); and, *"If you keep my commandments, you will* ***abide in my love****, just as I have kept the commandments of my Father, and I abide in His love"* (John 15:10).

Abiding in His love is clearly connected to "keeping the commandments." The "***commandments of my Father***" always refers to Torah; and Y'shua taught that "*if you love*" him, you will keep the Commandments. In other words love has everything to do with Sanctifying the Name of YHWH, which means to Set His Name and His Word (Torah) apart from all other authorities.

Mashiyach Y'shua clearly kept the commandments of his Father, but yet only a tiny minority of Christians would even consider the importance of these same Commandments – even though the name "Christian" comes from the same root *haMishchah* (the anointing) which means to be "Mashiyach like." Y'shua is the Word of YHWH, and about this Spirit of Mashiyach Moshe

wrote: *"And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My Commandments"* (Sh'mot/Exodus 20:6); and, *"Therefore you shall love YHWH your Elohim and keep His charge and His Statutes and His Judgments and His Commandments, always"* (D'varim/Deut. 11:1).

There are dozens of places in Scripture where "love" is tied in with keeping the Commandments. Unfortunately, those Christians who truly "love the Lord" according to Scripture are labeled as *Legalists* and *Judaizers* for keeping the Commandments, and often encounter persecution from "the Church." This is because in Christianity "love" is defined by status quo, so to be a good Christian each one must fashion their "love" according to the values of a core group or denomination. In recent times, many good, YHWH-fearing Christians have become ashamed to even be called "Christians" after being attacked by so many Christians for keeping the Commandments. Many opt instead to be labeled as "Believers" because they realize that love requires sacrifice, and that love is not a cerebral ideology that neglects the Commandments.

"And owe nothing to anyone; but to love one another. For he that loves his neighbor has fulfilled Torah. For this likewise, which it says: You shall not kill; nor commit adultery; nor steal; nor covet; and if there is any other commandment, it is completed in this sentence: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no evil to one's neighbor because love is the fulfillment of Torah" (Romans 13:8-10). Rav Shaul is clearly teaching that these four Commandments are examples of how a person demonstrates love to their neighbor; this kind of love is the fulfillment of Torah. *"For the entire Torah is properly understood in one Miltha (Word/Manifestation): 'You will love your neighbor as you would yourself'"* (Galatians 5:14). The many other definitions of love that lack the Commandments also lack the connection to Justice and Righteousness. Man's interpretation of "love" often reverts to carnal instincts like anarchy, excess, sensuality, emotionalism etc.

The Brit Chadasha literally means Covenant Renewed, a "*making new*" of the Covenant of Love that YHWH had formerly established between Himself and his people. Although there is a change of priesthood in the Renewed Covenant, YHWH's Word and Commandments remain eternal, *love has never changed*; if anything love has been magnified. *"You have heard that it has been said that you should not commit adultery. But I say to you that all who that looks at a woman as lustfully at once has committed adultery in his heart"* (Matt. 5:27, 28). Y'shua "raised the bar" but he also said, *"And because of the growth of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold"* (Matt. 24:12). Therefore, as the Commandments grow within the heart, ***true*** love will also grow. Love, therefore, is a voluntary and personal choice to do the right thing and keep the Commandments.

Joshua teaches that loving YHWH means *"to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments"*: *"But take diligent heed to do the Commandment and the Torah, which Moshe the servant of YHWH charged you, to love YHWH your Elohim, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul"* (Joshua 22:5). He declared *"…as for me and my house, we will serve YHWH"* (Joshua 25:15). To love YHWH means to keep His Commandments. There is no other substitute a person can make to demonstrate their love to YHWH or to each other, because true love is righteous; it is Set-Apart and does good towards YHWH and all of His creation. We are to become as "little children" who can put trust in Mashiyach and simply do what he asks, rather than be rebellious and find religious loopholes that make us feel better about breaking the Commandments.

"Consider how I love your precepts: quicken me, O YHWH, according to your lovingkindness" (Psalm 119:159). Love is a reciprocal giving and sharing that is based on being true to the Word of YHWH, and *"great peace have they which love your Torah: and nothing shall offend them"* (Psalm 119:165). Peace is established by love because love is the action of doing what is Right, Set Apart, Just and Good.

One of the greatest perversions accomplished against the Word of YHWH was to superimpose a false religious definition of love based on Church theology which, in the eyes of millions of

Christians, has rendered the Torah null and void. The unpleasant realities of "Christian love" through the centuries have spoken volumes in times when "Christian nations" like Spain, Germany and Poland brought hatred upon Jews and other races or religions that were not "Christian." Today members of the World Council of Churches are launching new crusades against the Jewish "occupation" of their homeland of Israel – the very lands YHWH gave to the Jewish people as an "everlasting possession" (Genesis 15:18); and from which He promised they would never again be removed (Amos 9:15).

Christian love is fashioned after "tolerance," rather than temperance and self control and discipline and accountability to one another and the Word of YHWH. Crime and decadence has escalated in "Christian nations" like the USA that would embarrass Sodom and Gomorrah. Y'shua said that the land of Sodom would fair better than some cities that had the truth presented to them but rejected it (Matthew 11:23, 24). The United States claims to led by "Christian" Presidents and approximately 65 percent of the nation claims to be Christian. The reality is that Christian America has one of the largest per capita crime rates in the world and twice the homicide and rape statistics of many European countries, under "Christian" leadership and "Christian" government.

What's more, Christians have an extremely high divorce rate simply because Christianity has defined love according to man's opinions. Most Christian leaders teach that Torah is taboo because "Jesus nailed it to the cross" and gave them the Commandment to *love*, so they teach *carte blanche* Torahlessness for the "forgiven." Sin is hidden under "Christian grace" because the new "Christian definition" of love provides *unlimited* pardon of willful and repetitive sin. Religious "Christian" love is based on doublethink that replaces YHWH's love with a religious tradition about love, but in reality this has desensitized people's hearts to one another and to Mashiyach. In reality this kind of Christian love is tyranny because it is simply love of the status quo; it is certainly not love according to Mashiyach and the Set Apart Scriptures!

The prophet Daniel wrote, *"And I prayed unto YHWH my Elohim, and made my confession, and said, O YHWH, the great and dreadful Elohim, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His Commandments"* (Daniel 9:4). Israel broke the Covenant that YHWH gave, just like Christianity is breaking the Renewed Covenant that is offered in Mashiyach. The Covenant is evidenced by an exchange of love between YHWH and His people, but it is incumbent upon mankind to love YHWH and to demonstrate love to others by keeping the Commandments. James wrote, *"And if in this you fulfill the Torah of Elohim, as it is written, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you will do well"* (James 2:8). ***The majority of Christian theologians translate the word "fulfill" as "bring to an end" but it clearly means to bring to a reality, perform or do***, as in a person's duty to love their spouse by their actions, where the actions of love is love demonstrated. To fulfill Torah means to have the love of the Father dwelling within the soul, and this means to not only welcome His Commandments but to *delight* in them as obedient children.

"There is no love that is greater than this that a man lay down his life for the sake of his friends. You are my friends if you do all that I commanded you" (Yochanan 15:13, 14) Y'shua speaks according to the Spirit of YHWH in him rather than his own soul; therefore, "all that I commanded you" is specifically referring to Torah.

Deliverance

"The Spirit of MASTER YHWH is upon me and because of this, He has anointed me to declare hope to the poor. And He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and to preach release to the captives and sight to the blind. And to free those who are oppressed (by the power of) forgiveness. And to preach the acceptable year of MASTER YHWH." Luke 4:18, 19

Y'shua Mashiyach is quoting Isaiah 61 in this verse and revealing his awesome power to bring about true deliverance. This also contains a very powerful revelation of who Mashiyach is. Here's the passage:

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of YHWH, that he might be glorified" (Isaiah 61:3).

Mashiyach brought forth beauty for ashes and replaced despair with hope. In this same chapter in Luke (verse 33) Y'shua is delivering a soul from an unclean spirit (demon), so that there is no mistaking his absolute power over the demonic. Millions of souls can and will testify to being delivered from oppression and torment by the power of Mashiyach. We can put our full and complete trust in Mashiyach Y'shua who epitomizes righteousness, goodness, fairness and wholeness with the greatest of love and compassion, and who brings great joy and comfort to our souls. Although we are able to experience tremendous peace and joy whenever we praise YHWH for what He has done through His Mashiyach, we are also called to be *"trees of righteousness"* which means that each one of us is responsible to co-labor in righteousness with Mashiyach.

Trees of righteousness refers to people of righteousness: *"the trees of the field shall clap their hands"* (Isaiah 55:12), *"And all the trees of the field shall know that I YHWH have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I YHWH have spoken and have done it"* (Ezekiel 17:24).

YHWH has planted His trees (souls) of righteousness all over the Earth. These are souls who are being formed in the Image of Elohim and who live according to righteousness rather than the pleasures of sin for a season. These souls are *"trees of righteousness,"* not spectators or vendors of righteousness, but a *Kedoshim* (Set Apart People) who practice and experience righteousness (the nature of Mashiyach) every day.

"I will greatly rejoice in YHWH, my soul shall be joyful in my Elohim; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness as a kahan (priestly dress), and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels" (Isaiah 61:10). The imagery of Mashiyach being covered with a robe of righteousness as priestly dress also applies to all who are *"priests of Elohim and of his Mashiyach"* (Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6) who are the Bride of Mashiyach.

A *"bride adorns herself with jewels"* is a picture of the *Kehillath* (congregation) of Mashiyach who wears precious jewels that depict the fruits of her righteousness. Mashiyach is clearly establishing a *"righteous bride"* who is known by her righteousness. *"Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb"* (Revelation 21:9). *"Let us rejoice and exult, and give glory to him: for the marriage supper of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. And it was granted her to be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean: for fine linen is the righteousness of the Set Apart believers"* (Revelation 19:7, 8).

This righteousness is set forth in Torah which is *"deep extensive learning in righteousness." "All Scripture that was written by the Spirit is profitable for instruction and for decisive refutation, and for correction, and for deep extensive learning in righteousness"* (2 Timothy 3:16). Torah and Mashiyach are One Truth, and herein lies the basis of all deliverance; however, there are three basic perspectives of Torah observance:

Deliverance through Obedience

Obedience to the Word of YHWH is evidence of true deliverance. Mashiyach says that those who do not do the will of his Father will *not* partake of the Kingdom of Elohim (Matt. 7:21). The judgment of all peoples and nations is according to the same Standard which is revealed in the Word of YHWH and that the Set Apart believers obey: *"And the temple of Elohim in heaven was opened; and the ark of His Covenant was seen in his temple: and there were flashes of lightning and thunders, and voices and an earthquake, and great hail"* (Rev. 11:18). There is a clear and future judgment on the horizon. The ark of His Covenant contains ***all*** of the Ten Commandments that are to be *"written upon the hearts"* of YHWH's people. Those who don't have Torah written upon their hearts will not be able to excuse themselves by suggesting that "Jesus did it all for them" or that their Rabbi or Pastor promised them that they would be in heaven.

"For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so YHWH Elohim will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:11). YHWH says that He will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations; this is very clearly stated within the original Tanakh reference regarding the Renewed Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Therefore, it is clearly a great deception to think that a person is fully delivered from the clutches of the enemy while they continue to transgress against Torah. All sin is transgression of Torah (1 John 3:4); without Torah we wouldn't know what constitutes sin (Romans 7:1-12).

There are plenty of indicators that point to the need for deliverance. The spiritual fruit within our souls, or lack thereof, is one good way in which to evaluate ourselves: *"Love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control"* (Galatians 5:22, 23). Each of these attributes manifest themselves within those who walk after the Spirit of Mashiyach. Many view these attributes as being relative to their current situation in life; yet others compare and judge their spiritual and emotional status against the rest of the populace. Unfortunately, the most popular attitude is to define spiritual fruits according to religious and cultural tradition rather than the Word of YHWH. Regardless as to how accurate the personal assessment of our needs, deliverance is something that we all require over the course of our lives. No one is immune or exempt; even Mashiyach endured temptation and manifold trials.

Deliverance is won when a person turns away from carnal habits and actively pursues righteousness, and this is also a good definition of Faith; this is beyond just belief or intellectual acknowledgement of righteousness or the knowledge of good and evil. If this were not the case, then Adam and Eve would never have been expelled from *Gan Eden* as their "knowledge" about the *Tree of Life* would have been sufficient to keep them in! Instead, it was their direct disobedience to YHWH, that changed their status. The fact remains that Adam and Eve's story originates in the oldest part of the Tanakh, but their fall from grace because of their disobedience remains very much a current problem today and for the Good News writers! (Romans 5:12-21, 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45) So, if the earliest part of the Torah remains relevant, binding and in need of resolution for every current believer, how then can later parts of Torah become irrelevant? NO, it's impossible, it can't! The deliverance from sin that Adam and Eve experienced was through Mashiyach. Torah therefore details and elucidates elements of the *Tree of Life* and the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil* that were birthed in Mashiyach!

Faith then brings a progressive desire to live righteously, which is clearly by inspiration of the Ruach haKodesh, which in turn brings harmony between YHWH and His Creation. Furthermore, as anyone with the most basic Hebrew and Aramaic understanding knows, there is a direct linguistic and prophetic linkage in Genesis 1 between "in the beginning/creation" (*bereshit*) and "covenant" (*breet*) and the verb for "to make" (*bara*) and "Son" (*bar*)!

Y'shua taught, *"It is written that the Son of man does not live by bread alone, but by all the Words that proceed from the mouth of YHWH"* (Matthew 4:4). It is obvious that mankind must live

on this "bread" of the Word of YHWH (Deuteronomy 8:3). Y'shua declared that he as well as all of mankind are called and required to live by the "Words" of YHWH. This fact is also why Mashiyach was born in *Beyt-Lechem* (Bethlehem), or literally "the house of bread"!

The enemy attempts to micro-manage souls into doing his bidding; therefore, it is imperative to remember that Torah sets the Standard by which all flesh shall be judged. Torah observance protects us from becoming prey for the enemy. Although many religious people may claim that Torah observance "doesn't matter," the evidence shows that lack of trust, faith and disloyalty towards the Word of YHWH is what is waging war against the Unity of the Body. Those who say it "doesn't matter" are simply relying on their own religious traditions to carry them through. But Mashiyach says, *"All who loosen, therefore, from one (of) these small commandments and teach thus to the sons of man, will be called little in the Kingdom of Heaven, but all who do and teach this will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. For I say to you that unless your righteousness exceeds more than that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven"* (Matthew 5:19, 20).

Lies, Procrastination and Rebellion

We could examine a host of indicators, but lies, procrastination and rebellion are clearly normatives of the carnal flesh. It appears many souls will go through their entire life lying to themselves and others, procrastinating and rebelling against YHWH, while at the same time believing themselves to be "saved." The problem is, all form of rebellion is protected by pride. The individual may think him or herself to be loving, generous and caring, but if they are ever confronted about lying, not keeping their word, or procrastination and rebellion against Mashiyach, they often indict the messenger instead of examining the status of their own souls. Y'shua said,"*The spirit is ready but the body is weak"* (Matthew 26:41). Therefore when we recognize the need for change but realize we don't have the power to do it on our own, we must realize we're in immediate need of deliverance. Some people are wise enough to get on their knees right now and change, but most will lie to themselves and procrastinate. Y'shua said, *"But if your eye should be evil, all your body will be darkness. If therefore, the light that is in you is dark, how much your darkness will be!"* (Matthew 6:23) In other words, when deliverance is needed we often have no idea of the severity of the problem. If there is darkness then how much darkness? Often when a person begins to root out the darkness (hidden rebellion) they discover much more than they realized. Darkness is a constant; where there is no light there is immediate darkness. However, the good news is that darkness flees when light shines into hidden areas of the soul.

A very simple and logical way to defeat darkness is to welcome the light and focus on the Truth – but what is Truth? Y'shua says, *"Father sanctify them by your Truth, for Your Word is Truth"* (Yochanan 17:17). Y'shua also says that his *word* will judge all those who reject him (Yochanan 12:48). Mashiyach is the Standard; therefore, when the Spirit begins to convict us of sin (like lies, procrastination and rebellion) we can distinguish between the carnal man who is lazy to make change, and the spiritual man who has unlimited resources to change and become like Mashiyach. It is also very helpful to have others who are mighty in Scripture and full of the discernment of the Ruach haKodesh to bear witness for our spiritual nature and against our carnal nature.

The Power of Belief

Each soul must believe that YHWH exists and that He rewards those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). This is a beautiful discipline and promise that Rav Shaul takes directly from Torah: *"But if from thence you shall seek YHWH your Elohim, you shall find him, if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if you turn to YHWH your Elohim, and shall be obedient unto his voice; For YHWH your Elohim is a merciful Elohim; He will not forsake you, neither destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which he swore unto them"* (Deuteronomy 4:29, 31). Seeking YHWH with all your heart and soul means to obey His Torah and put trust in Him alone.

Notice that this promise extends into the "latter days" which are the days in which we are now living.

With Faith all things are possible, as Y'shua said: *"…if you are able to believe anything is possible to be for him who believes"* (Mark 9:23). *"By faith Enoch was translated and did not taste death…"* (Hebrews 11:5). Faith is the action of "entering in" to the Word of YHWH. *"So shall My Word be that goes forth out of My Mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in that which I sent it"* (Isaiah 55:11). The Word of YHWH Elohim *"quickens the dead and calls those things which are not, as if they were"* (Romans 4:17). Therefore, we must think, speak and pray according to the authority of the Word of YHWH, regardless of what "the world" might send our way; this is how *"the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor are given hope"* (Matthew 11:5). By Faith we can see things according to YHWH's assessment and then respond to the Word of YHWH with obedient expectation. This is evidence of true deliverance. We must never look at others for what only Mashiyach can provide, and not compare ourselves to others or expect things from others that belong to the hand of YHWH, *"But when Y'shua heard, he said to them, The healthy are not in need of a doctor, rather those that are badly afflicted"* (Matthew 9:12).

Dispersion

The dispersion of the Twelve Tribes extends throughout all manner of geography, culture and religion. Those from the northern ten tribes of Israel *"feared YHWH, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day"* (2 Kings 17:41). This is why we find evidence of "Jewish synagogues" that also adopted sun worship and paganism while retaining a "Jewish" identity. The dispersion has also caused many Jews to continue to forsake the Ancient Paths spoken of by Jeremiah and the prophets of YHWH.

The majority of Jews today have adopted lifestyles that are acceptable to their local pagan (or secular) cultures, wherever they reside. *"And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lies desolate and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lies desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it"* (Vayikra /Leviticus 26:33-35).

There are numerous examples of Hellenized Jewish groups who feel the importance of retaining a "Jewish" identity within various religious labels. Jews for Jesus is just one of many examples. Even the name, "Jews for Jesus" is often received in an offensive manner by Jews because of what Christians have done against the Jewish people "in the name of Jesus." Ultimately YHWH is our Savior; what it comes down to within Jewish-Christian debate, is a difference of opinion on how YHWH saves His people. As Netzarim we proclaim that the promises in Tanakh have been and will be fulfilled by Y'shua of Nazareth, but to imply that the rest of Jewry is against Y'shua (the true Mashiyach) is very problematic, even when taking into account centuries of acrimonious history. No Jew would deny that righteous Israelite men and women have been raised up by YHWH to give us the benefit of their wisdom, character and examples for better living. To the extent then that it can be proven that Y'shua observed Torah and kept the sacred days—and this extent is tremendous—no Jew could respectfully be "against" every single thing he said and did. However, Jews for Jesus teach that Jews must convert to Christianity to be "saved." The Jews for Jesus organization spurns Torah lifestyles and they live in such a manner as to be fully accepted in Christian Sunday churches.

As most other Christo-Pagan based institutions, the Jews for Jesus organization touts the Christian doctrines as the way to "salvation." They view Netzarim Jews as "Legalists" and "Judaizers" and

do not subscribe to being conformed to Mashiyach through Torah observance. As in other post-Constantinian Christian traditions, salvation is offered through the Jews for Jesus organization to those who say a "sinners' prayer" and the candidate for "salvation" must agree that their "doctrine of salvation" is truth in order to get "saved." In effect, Jews for Jesus are simply token Jews who endorse Marcionite and Constantine Christianity, but who prefer to retain a veneer of "Jewish" identity. These kind of tactics, which are surely not confined to just JFJ, are part and parcel of what some Netzarim refer to as "Greeks in Jewish clothing."

On the other end of the spectrum are the Reform and Conservative Jewish movements. The Reform Jewish Movement is the largest Jewish movement today which is comprised of various splinter groups. Some of these, such as the Reconstructionists, appear to be focused on a feel-good, self-deterministic humanism for Jews, but relationship to YHWH's covenant is greatly de-emphasized as stated in the following excerpts from www.jrf.org:

"Many people have come to reject God because they understand God as a being that can break the laws of nature and act like a person. Reconstructionism rejects those ideas about God, as have many Jewish philosophers over time. Reconstructionism has offered many people who previously rejected God a renewed possibility of belief as they have been exposed to different conceptions of God."

"But some Jews will continue to reject even a reconstructed idea of God. It *is* possible to feel committed to Jewish values without believing in God. Throughout the ages, God has been the source of the commandment for us to create a just and fair world. But it is certainly possible to feel committed to a better world without connecting the source of that commitment to God… Reconstructionism has stressed *belonging* over *believing* when it comes to Jewish identity. Belonging to a group with common commitments, culture and memories has given us a valuable sense of peoplehood and mission that has power regardless of what we believe about God."

"There are indeed many similarities between Reconstructionism and Reform Judaism as it is currently practiced. In their attitude toward *halakhah* as tradition rather than as binding law, in their belief in *equality between women and men*, in their *acceptance of gays and lesbians* in all aspects of the life of the congregation, and in their inclusion of *intermarried families*, Reform Judaism and Reconstructionism have taken a stand together as the most progressive elements in Jewish life."

"Reconstructionists prefer to think of Judaism as a living, ever-growing way of life. This means that Jews today do not practice their religion the same way that Jews did even 100 years ago, let alone farther back in time. Those who currently consider themselves the guardians of *halakhah* for the most part refuse to acknowledge this process, and instead look at Jewish law as a rigid, unchanging body of laws."

"People choose their practices based on their study of holy text, of history, and on the basis of their own personal values and their community's practices. Reconstructionists feel that decisions about how to practice religion as a community should be made by the community, and that personal religious decisions are best left to the individual, in connection with Jewish tradition and with others in the community. Certainly Reconstructionists strive to be dedicated, educated, and practicing Jews, and that's what's important."

Reform Judaism and Reconstructionism weigh in on identity and belonging, where Jews can collectively define God according to the traditions of modern secular culture. In this manner, Jews rely on humanism, relativism and materialism while "belonging" together with other Jews who also elevate similar worldly values and ideals. In other words these Jewish institutions clearly recognize their physical Jewish ancestry but define the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in a way that is pleasing their modern thinking.

Moving on, the Conservative Jewish Movement is the "modernization" of Orthodox Judaism whereas Orthodox Judaism has its origins with the Pharisees of Y'shua's day. None of these groups are all too interested in what the Tanakh (Torah-Prophets-Writings) or the B'rit Chadasha (Renewed Covenant) actually teaches, as they put their own authority (commentaries and traditions) on an equal footing with Scripture (Tanakh). Two thousand years ago Y'shua addressed this matter in Matthew 15:1-20 and 23:13-33, while also admitting Pharisaic authority elsewhere when they use Torah in proper isolation (Matthew 13:52, 23:1; Mark 12:28-34, John 7:19). A few centuries later we would see these Pharisaic excesses crystallize in places like Rambam's Introduction to the Mishnah, which states: *"If there are 1000 prophets, all of them of the stature of Elijah and Elisha, giving a certain interpretation, and 1001 Rabbis giving the opposite interpretation, you shall incline after the majority and the law according to the 1001 Rabbis, not according to the 1000 venerable prophets…Elohim did not permit us to learn from the prophets, only from the Rabbis who are men of logic and reason."* Since this diglot also notes excesses on the Roman Catholic side, the Jewish version of the same thing can hardly escape notice either.

Another case in point from "The Torah: A Modern Commentary," W. Gunther Plaut, p. xviii, xxiii (1981, Union of American Hebrew Congregations) reads: "Moses…had…nothing to do with the writing of the complete Torah. His name was attached to it as author at the time of the book's canonization. This whole analysis is vigorously disputed by those who attempt to show that Moses was indeed the author. They consider much or all higher literary criticism as erroneous and some of its foundations as infected by Christian bias."

So if Jews feel they invented Torah, then Jews can also rewrite it to suit their modern purposes. But of course that would mean that if Jews invented Torah, then they would have invented Mashiyach also! This is a very integral part of "the dispersion" as it depicts the new gods which many Jews are following, but all these "gods" have one thing in common, they trash torah and speak evil against Mashiyach. But let's not pick on Jews only, here's what the Vatican has to say about the authority of "biblical texts":

"Fundamentalism also places undue stress upon the inerrancy of certain details in the biblical texts, especially in what concerns historical events or supposedly scientific truth. It often historicizes material which from the start never claimed to be historical... Fundamentalism likewise tends to adopt very narrow points of view. It accepts the literal reality of an ancient, out-of-date cosmology, simply because it is found expressed in the Bible; this blocks any dialogue with a broader way of seeing the relationship between culture and faith. Its relying upon a non-critical reading of certain texts of the Bible serves to reinforce political ideas and social attitudes that are marked by prejudices -- racism, for example -- quite contrary to the Christian gospel." (The interpretation of the Bible in the Church (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), pp.71-72.)

Rabbinical Judaism has been saying all along that their traditions are more authoritative than Torah! Catholics have been saying all along that they've got an "infallible pope" (a man)! So neither institution feels an imperative need to follow the Word of YHWH as their authority! The nature of the dispersion was prophesied that Israel will experience and absorb everything the nations have to offer, including all forms of paganism and humanism; *"And YHWH shall scatter you among the nations, and you shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither YHWH shall lead you. And there you shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell"* (D'varim/Deut. 4:26-28). The work of men's hands has produced Rabbinical Judaism and Catholicism, but of course there are also the greater gods, a.k.a. "movie stars", "sports figures", "athletes" and "rich business figures" that many religious people venerate; and lesser gods, a.k.a. palatial homes, planes, trains, automobiles and luxury vacations which are the center of worship, attention and conversation for many. The aforementioned gods are fashionably dressed in intellectualism, relativism, syncretism, humanism, evolution and, of course, religion. Materialism is a popular deity for many Christians and Jews who assert that

either God (or Chance) has given them many wonderful blessings. Most religious folks see YHWH's everlasting righteousness (Psalm 119:142) as impartial, old or embarrassingly unfair; hence, the need to devise a new "god" according to their own higher criticism that allows a favorable comparison with all the rest of the modern "isms".

Although the dispersion appears to have sent the ancient Israelites into oblivion, most Jews already have a good idea that they can run, but they can't hide from YHWH. Jews have taken everything the pagan or humanistic world has to offer and turned it to their advantage. Jews are known for remarkable achievements in all sectors of human endeavor and have clearly refined and defined the best and the worst things on the planet. YHWH has released His people Israel to penetrate deep into the soil of the nations, for a purpose. The dispersion has been established for Mashiyach's sake; it is now a universal consequence and nobody can reverse it. Israel's "dispersal" into Egypt was only a type of what has happened to the Jewish people over the last two and a half millennia, but there is a mystery element to the dispersion according to the Word of YHWH.

The world is heading into the big storm and the when ship appears to be going down, Mashiyach ben David will reveal the next "Jonah" (dove) as both scapegoat and deliverer. The grand finale is found in Revelation but YHWH's response to His people is, *"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him"* (Hoshea 14:4), but of course this comes at a great cost. In another place, *"YHWH has appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee"* (Jeremiah 31:1). Just as YHWH was "forgotten" by the Israelites in Egypt so is He forgotten today by the "educated" masses who *"say in their heart, YHWH will not do good, neither will he do evil"* (Zephaniah 1:12).

The dispersion was prophesied to be for a finite period of time so, *"Hear the word of YHWH, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd does his flock"* (Jeremiah 31:10).

Divine Communication

Most believers communicate with *Shemayim* (heaven), in one way or another, throughout the day. Whether through prayer or just simple silence, we are "testifying" with the thoughts and choices we make; and, whether we realize it or not, every choice affects our relationship with Mashiyach. What we choose to eat, wear, think and do is neither isolated nor irrelevant to the *Malchut* (Kingdom of) Elohim. Whom we choose as our friends and what we talk about and plan for is all done on the platform of our world view and relationship with YHWH. Each of us is very precious in YHWH's eyes and, just as a loving father or mother who is enthralled with a precious son or daughter, our Heavenly Parent provides counsel and wisdom to those of us who have "ears" to hear.

It is therefore very wise to question everything, to test all things and prove all things – and, most importantly, to hold fast to what is true and become a person of truth. Yet the prophets have warned us, *"How do you say, We are wise, and the Torah of YHWH is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes works falsehood. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the Word of YHWH; and what wisdom is in them?"* (Jeremiah 8:8,9) Whatever we read in the Word of YHWH must also be confirmed in our *neshama* (spirit). We must be open to instruction into our spirits through the Ruach haKodesh and live in favor of the Word of YHWH, instead of allowing wishful or fearful thinking simply because we feel like a small minority in the grand scheme of things. YHWH's Ruach speaks to us as we meditate on His Word and, whether we realize it or not, we all respond – either positively or negatively – through our thoughts and the intents of our hearts.

Whenever we find the Word confusing and difficult to understand it is because our own spirits have not been trained to enter in. It is then that we must realize the need to apply our hearts, minds and souls to listen and hear and DO the Word of YHWH in order to understand. Y'shua taught, *"He who desires to do His will can comprehend my teaching, if it is from Elohim, or if from my own will I speak"* (John 7:17). When a person believes enough in themselves that YHWH created each one for greatness and purpose then the burden of change rests in choosing to *"do His will"* rather than being conformed to the modern world's values.

Much confusion occurs when trying to study Scripture through the intellect, when in fact, we needed to listen and apply YHWH's Word which is written upon our hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-34). The door to the heart is love and by demonstrating love to YHWH we establish a bond with the Father. When Y'shua said *"If you love me, keep my Commandments"* (John 14:15), he was speaking in the Spirit of YHWH; therefore, the most powerful way to open up the lines of communication between us and "heaven" is to begin to keep the Commandments.

Perhaps you or someone you know is asking YHWH to reveal His Perfect will for their lives. At this point we can tell them something they will rarely, if ever, hear from the pulpits or magazines: When we choose to be obedient, Torah observant believers in Messiah, YHWH will hear our prayers. If not, then our words will fall on deaf ears: "*The foolish shall not stand in Thy sight: You hate all workers of iniquity*" (Psalm 5:5). There is no need to be frustrated if one cannot "hear from heaven." When or if you believe you have heard from heaven, it is far better to ask YHWH about what you thought you heard, instead of solicting the opinions of others. Many actually do hear from YHWH but shut out His voice when their Rabbi or Pastor, family members or friends speak against YHWH's Word.

Divine communication opens to us when we repent of breaking YHWH's Torah and return to Him and enter into His Kingdom. It is only after we finally decide to open our hearts to Torah (not religion) and order our lives according to His Word that we are able to enter into a dialogue with Heaven and can begin to understand the deep and everlasting love He has for all His Creation. There can only be one singular supreme all-knowing authority Who has an absolute interest in perfect justice, and that Authority is YHWH. The reason that mankind was created with free choice, was to allow each one of us to individually *sanctify* (Set Apart) the Name of YHWH and (many believe) to replenish the spiritual beings who turned away from YHWH to join the rebellion against Heaven. The Word of YHWH (Torah) is the book of Life that draws the spirit of man to the Spirit of Mashiyach. Truth harmonizes all things and satisfies the most difficult of questions about our connection to YHWH.

YHWH knows each one of us far better than we know ourselves. As we approach Mashiyach we can easily recognize both our failings and our unlimited potential in Him. YHWH has "breathed" a unique spirit into each of us; this is YHWH's gift and will to impart Himself into His Creation.

Humankind has approximately 6,000 years of cumulative intelligible experience recorded in Scripture and through archeological and historical records. Our generation can look back to the cause and effect of human choice and how the decisions of our ancestors helped shape us and our world into who and what we are today; but each soul in every generation has the power of choice regardless of what our forefathers have chosen. If we put away all religious ideas about YHWH and simply do what He requires, we will most certainly each discover manifold profound experiences in the Divine: *"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what YHWH requires of you, to do justly and to love mercy, and to humble yourself to walk with your Elohim"* (Micah 6:8). The fact of the matter is when we humble ourselves, and seek YHWH and keep His Commandments, many other people will seek to humble us even further. They will scorn, mock and ridicule us for our Faith causing us to either continue choosing *"the narrow door and straight road"* that leads to life, or to decide to follow the multitudes to destruction….

Divine communication is not some "super spiritual" experience as postured by some, but about being humble and obedient: *"For the worship that is pure and set apart before Elohim the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction; and: that one keep himself unspotted from the world"* (James 1:27). The world is the carnal world of religion and entertainment, the lust of the flesh, pride of life, paganism, materialism, relativism and humanism – those things which have no part in eternity. We make ourselves available to YHWH by completely rejecting the fallen world, Babylon the Great, which promotes the Mystery of Iniquity.

Can you hear from Heaven? Yes you can; the choice is yours! YHWH demonstrated the most extravagant love possible by sending Mashiyach Y'shua so that Heaven would open to all who seek Divine Communication through His Spirit. This is the Kingdom Offer that Mashiyach holds out all who accepts his offer and repents and turns to Him and is obedient to His Commandments.

Divinity Passages

Whether you follow Orthodox Judaism, or Messianic, or Christian perspectives regarding the nature and office of Mashiyach, here's something to consider. Even though some of the greatest contentions in these religions is centered on the divinity of Mashiyach, it's also possible that they can *all* be correct. Many Orthodox Jews do not acknowledge Y'shua as Mashiyach simply because they learned about Jesus from the classic anti-Torah Hellenized perspective that was born in pagan Greek mythology. Orthodox Jews believe Y'shua was put to death for blasphemy on the grounds that he made himself out to be YHWH. The Orthodox Jewish community also believes that it's impossible for the flesh of anyone (including Mashiyach) to be YHWH and from Genesis to Revelation the Hebrew and Aramaic Scriptures clearly prove they are correct, flesh is flesh and spirit is spirit.

However in Yochanan 1:14 we read "And the *Miltha became flesh* and dwelt among us...":

וּמֶלְתָּא בְּסַרָא הֲוָא וַאֲגֶן בַּן

The footnote on the word Miltha clearly explains that the physical flesh of Y'shua is not the Miltha (Word of YHWH), but the manifestation of the Ruach haKodesh is YHWH within Y'shua.

It is not difficult to imagine how Greek culture influenced early Greek Christians into believing that a "spirit being" could transform himself into human flesh. One of the elements of paganism is that their gods came to earth and became part god and part human. However Y'shua teaches, "The thing, which is born from flesh, is flesh, and the thing, which is born from spirit, is spirit." (Yochanan 3:6)

Unfortunately, the New Testament was translated by those who lived outside a Torah based culture and by those who had not entirely abandoned paganism, neither had they a mature intellectual understanding of Torah. This resulted in verses such as: "God (theos) was manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16 KJV) becoming proof for the majority of Christians today that Jesus had divine flesh. The original verse in Aramaic reads; "And truly great, is this *mystery of righteousness which was revealed in the flesh* and righteous in the spirit...". Yes indeed, a mystery of righteousness was revealed in the flesh of one very important human being.

The majority of Christians believe that "Jesus is God" which may also be correct within Torah, if understood and explained within the context of Torah. The anointing (*mishcha*) of Y'shua by the Ruach haKodesh is uniquely differentiated in the Tanakh by the office of Mashiyach (Messiah) as the Son of Elohim, let's first examine Scriptures in Tanakh that elucidate us about the office of Mashiyach.

1) Genesis (B'resheet) 1:1-3; to begin with we need to understand how Mashiyach was revealed through the Alev Tav, please consult the first appendix entitled Alef Tav for this first witness.

2) Exodus (Shemot) 23:20-21

הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָךְ לְפָנֶיךָ לִשְׁמָרְךָ בַּדָּרֶךְ וְלַהֲבִיאֲךָ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הֲכִנֹתִי

Behold I am going to send a Messenger before your face to guard and keep you along the way and bring you that I have prepared for you.

הִשָּׁמֶר מִפָּנָיו וּשְׁמַע בְּקֹלוֹ אַל־תַּמֵּר בּוֹ כִּי לֹא יִשָּׂא לְפִשְׁעֲכֶם כִּי שְׁמִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ

Be on your watchful guard in his presence and hear and obey his voice. Do not disobey him for he will not pardon your skirting around (My) commands because My Name is in him.

Here we discover that this "Messenger" is utterly unique in Scripture. Since no heavenly messenger has the authority to forgive sin, there is no need for YHWH to warn that such forgiveness would not be forthcoming directly from that Messenger unless that same Messenger otherwise had this authority. In the Renewed Covenant we are told the Son's name is superior to all other messengers. This must then be derived directly from this Torah passage because no messenger in Tanakh had YHWH's Name directly, but merely His title of El (RaphaEL, UriEL, MichaEL, etc.) and this one has Yah in his name directly, the same Name that has the power to redeem all men (Acts 4:12).

3) Numbers (Bemidbar) 23:19

לֹא אִישׁ אֵל וִיכַזֵּב וּבֶן־אָדָם וְיִתְנֶחָם הַהוּא אָמַר וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה וְדִבֶּר וְלֹא יְקִימֶנָּה׃

El is not a man that He should be false; nor a son of man that He should reconsider.
Has He said and not made it happen or spoken and had it not be established?

Here is one of the greatest clues in all of Tanakh that pertains to the office of Mashiyach. YHWH is literally not a man or the son of man—so the Son cannot be the Father! And yet, in Genesis 18 and 19 it is clear that of the three Messengers that visit Abraham, one of them is actually YHWH Himself. So if YHWH chooses to look like a man, He literally is not a man but merely the appearance of one. That doesn't mean however that Y'shua the Son was not really a man—which is Gnostic heresy. In Y'shua's case he was a human being—the only one—prophesied to have YHWH's spirit to dwell completely within him but side by side and separate from his humanity.

It is also critical to make the distinction between Christian-speak statements like "Jesus is LORD" and actual New Testament statements that YHWH is Y'shua the Mashiyach—those are two different things. The former suggests that a man with one of the three most common names in ancient Israel can as a human be the equal of YHWH, and therefore is idolatry. The latter is that YHWH willed, prophesied and actualized His Ruach within the Only Begotten, as was foretold in Isaiah 11:1-2 and Zechariah 12:10 and many other verses.

4) Numbers (Bemidbar) 24:17

אֶרְאֶנּוּ וְלֹא עַתָּה אֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ וְלֹא קָרוֹב דָּרַךְ כּוֹכָב מִיַּעֲקֹב וְקָם שֵׁבֶט
מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וּמָחַץ פַּאֲתֵי מוֹאָב וְקַרְקַר כָּל־בְּנֵי שֵׁת׃

I see him, but not now. I behold him, but not close by.
A star shall come forth from Ya'akov.
A scepter shall rise up from Israel and shall crush the forehead of Moab
and tear down all the sons of chaos (Sheth).

This very unique "star" comes forth from Ya'akov, or more precisely, the heavenly counterpart of Ya'akov comes down to inherit the scepter of Judah. This reference is clearly about the Son of Yah who comes down from heaven, for whom Proverbs 30:4 asks, "what is His Name and what is the name of His Son?"

5) Isaiah (Yeshayahu) 11:1-3

וְיָצָא חֹטֶר מִגֵּזַע יִשָׁי וְנֵצֶר מִשָּׁרָשָׁיו יִפְרֶה׃

Then a twig will spring forth from the stock of Jesse and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

וְנָחָה עָלָיו רוּחַ יְהוָה

The Ruach of YHWH will rest on him:

רוּחַ חָכְמָה וּבִינָה

The spirit of wisdom and understanding;

רוּחַ עֵצָה וּגְבוּרָה

The spirit of counsel and power;

רוּחַ דַּעַת וְיִרְאַת יְהוָה׃

The spirit of knowledge (and) reverence for YHWH,

וַהֲרִיחוֹ בְּיִרְאַת יְהוָה

And he will delight in the reverence for YHWH.

It would be beyond foolish for anyone to claim that Isaiah's teaching is pagan since he proclaims ***seven spirits*** of YHWH! Each of these attributes come from YHWH and they rest in Mashiyach. These attributes are not separate "gods" any more than the man who is prophesied to have YHWH's Ruach dwell bodily, yet separately inside him!

6) Isaiah (Yeshayahu) 53:1

מִי הֶאֱמִין לִשְׁמֻעָתֵנוּ יְהוָה עַלְמִי נִגְלָתָה

Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of YHWH been revealed?

Here's that part of Isaiah 53 that actually has not been debated "into the ground" by Christians and Jews. Nevertheless, the Netzari perspective is differentiated from both schools. The arm of YHWH is a metaphor that, by direct reference here, will simply be rejected by Isaiah's people who won't believe the report—or Gospel. As a result, this verse clearly tells us that whomever Israel popularly proclaims as Mashiyach cannot be the right guy, as history has more than proven over the past two millennia.

But within these few words is also a wealth of magnificent information. If we consider our own limbs and their relationship to the rest of our body we will have the single greatest metaphor for understanding YHWH's nature and His relationship to Mashiyach. The arm mentioned here is not a separate man. It is not superior to other limbs. It cannot move without the express permission and command of the brain. Such is the nature between Father and Son on the divine side, or with respect to their sharing the *one* divine nature.

In this verse the Hebrew word for "reveal" is *gela*, from this word we get the name Galilee. There are many such place names in Scripture that reveal a parallel message of their own, these are currently being detailed in an essay entitled "The Secret of the 50 Names" see www.aent.org.

7) Daniel 7:13-14

חָזֵה הֲוֵית בְּחֶזְוֵי לֵילְיָא וַאֲרוּ עִם־עֲנָנֵי שְׁמַיָּא כְּבַר אֱנָשׁ אָתֵה הֲוָה

וְעַד־עַתִּיק יוֹמַיָּא מְטָה וּקְדָמוֹהִי הַקְרְבוּהִי׃

I kept gazing into the night visions and behold! With the clouds of heaven was drawing near one like a Son of Man! And he came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.

וְלֵהּ יְהִיב שָׁלְטָן וִיקָר וּמַלְכוּ וְכֹל עַמְמַיָּא אֻמַיָּא וְלִשָׁנַיָּא לֵהּ יִפְלְחוּן
שָׁלְטָנֵהּ שָׁלְטָן עָלַם דִּילָא יֶעְדֵּה וּמַלְכוּתֵהּ דִּילָא תִתְחַבַּל׃
And to him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom so that all the peoples,
nations and men of every language might be under his command.
And his kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.

This entire chapter of Daniel tells us there are two thrones in heaven. On one sits the Ancient of Days—also known as "the Eternal" or YHWH. On the other is a universal and eternal ruler called the Son of Man. Whether that appellation is meant as just referring to a prophet like Ezekiel or to Mashiyach is irrelevant. The point is there is a great personage called the Son of Man who gets eternal and universal kingship. Regardless then as to how a person views the rabbinic rejection of Y'shua in this context, this should at the very least dispel the notion that Y'shua's claims about himself were never part of the Tanakh, they clearly were. Obviously this concept is not of pagan origin!

8) Daniel 9:24-27

שָׁבְעִים שְׁבֻעִים נֶחְתַּךְ עַלעַמְּךָ וְעַלעִיר קָדְשֶׁךָ לְכַלֵּא הַפֶּשַׁע וּלַחְתֹּם וּלְהָתֵם חַטָּאוֹת
חַטָּאת וּלְכַפֵּר עָוֹן וּלְהָבִיא צֶדֶק עֹלָמִים וְלַחְתֹּם חָזוֹן וְנָבִיא וְלִמְשֹׁחַ קֹדֶשׁ קָדָשִׁים׃
Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your Set-Apart city in order to finish
transgression, to be finished with sin, to cover over (make atonement) for iniquity, to bring in
eternal righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most Set-Apart place.

וְתֵדַע וְתַשְׂכֵּל מִן־מֹצָא דָבָר לְהָשִׁיב וְלִבְנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם עַדמָשִׁיחַ נָגִיד שָׁבֻעִים שִׁבְעָה
וְשָׁבֻעִים שִׁשִּׁים וּשְׁנַיִם תָּשׁוּב וְנִבְנְתָה רְחוֹב וְחָרוּץ וּבְצוֹק הָעִתִּים׃
Therefore know and clearly understand that from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild
Jerusalem until the Anointed Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It will be
rebuilt with a large open place and a moat even in times of great trouble.

וְאַחֲרֵי הַשָּׁבֻעִים שִׁשִּׁים וּשְׁנַיִם יִכָּרֵת מָשִׁיחַ וְאֵין לוֹ וְהָעִיר וְהַקֹּדֶשׁ יַשְׁחִית עַם נָגִיד
הַבָּא וְקִצּוֹ בַּשֶּׁטֶף וְעַד קֵץ מִלְחָמָה נֶחֱרֶצֶת שֹׁמֵמוֹת׃
Then after the sixty-two weeks the Anointed Prince will be cut off and have nothing, and the
(other) people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end
will come with a flood and to the end there will be war as desolations have been decreed.

וְהִגְבִּיר בְּרִית לָרַבִּים שָׁבוּעַ אֶחָד וַחֲצִי הַשָּׁבוּעַ יַשְׁבִּית זֶבַח וּמִנְחָה וְעַל כְּנַף
שִׁקּוּצִים מְשֹׁמֵם וְעַדכָּלָה וְנֶחֱרָצָה תִּתַּךְ עַלשֹׁמֵם׃
And he will confirm a covenant with the many for a single week, but in the midst of that week
he will put an end to sacrifice and offering and on the wing of abominations will come the one
who brings desolation, even up to a complete annihilation, one that is decreed and poured out
on the one who makes desolation.

The Messianic and prophetic nature of this passage is dealt with elsewhere. For now the main issue is that the Mashiyach must come before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. The question then becomes how many would-be "messiahs" were even falsely alleged by great numbers of people to put a complete end to sin and offering during this period?

9) Zechariah 6:12

וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יַהְוֶה צְבָאוֹת לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה־אִישׁ צֶמַח
שְׁמוֹ וּמִתַּחְתָּיו יִצְמָח וּבָנָה אֶת־הֵיכַל יַהְוֶה׃

Then say to him, "Thus says YHWH Tsavaot, "Behold a man who has the same name as The Branch, for he will branch out from where he is and he will build the temple of YHWH."

Most of Zechariah deals with setting up men in his day who are symbolic of future events and in many cases have the same names as their future counterparts. This trend begins in chapter 3 where the associates of the high priest Yehoshua ben Yehozadak are directly called forerunners of things to come. By chapter 6, it becomes clear that the same is true for the high priest himself as he will have the same name of *The Branch*—a common title for Mashiyach. By the time five more centuries pass, the long form of this high priest's name became popularly truncated to "Y'shua" even though the original form never really went away altogether. The bottom line though is this: Zechariah 6:10 is the only place in Tanakh that directly tells us the Mashiyach will be named Yehoshua and called *The Branch* at the same time.

10) Zechariah 12:10

וְשָׁפַכְתִּי עַל־בֵּית דָּוִיד וְעַל יוֹשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם רוּחַ חֵן וְתַחֲנוּנִים וְהִבִּיטוּ אֵלַי אֵת
אֲשֶׁר־דָּקָרוּ וְסָפְדוּ עָלָיו כְּמִסְפֵּד עַל־הַיָּחִיד וְהָמֵר עָלָיו כְּהָמֵר עַל־הַבְּכוֹר׃

"And I will pour out on the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. And they will look upon Me whom they have pierced and they will mourn for him as an Only Begotten son and will weep bitterly over him as they would in mourning a first born son."

This passage very clearly points to Y'shua as haMashiyach. The original Hebrew provides a far greater accuracy than an English translation could possibly hope to do. The first and most important thing to establish is Who is speaking this verse, and when we look at 12:9 the answer is very clear: YHWH.

The second element to investigate is this phrase ***et** asher dakaru*, where YHWH says with the help of the direct object ***et***: *Towards me have pierced they*. YHWH though cannot be pierced literally, so there must be another explanation.

That answer, and the last one I needed before I surrendered my life to Y'shua, was in the word *yachid*. Unlike echad, this is an exclusive singularity and means "never before and never again". That told me there were aspects of Mashiyach that only applied to him and no other human being, including the in-dwelling of all aspects of YHWH's Ruach in Isaiah 11:1-2. The term "Only Begotten" is carried over intact into the Aramaic NT with the phrase *Eykhadiya*, which literally means "the One". And so he is!

Now that we have a Torah basis to establish the nature of Mashiyach, let's investigate and compare these elements within the original Aramaic Renewed Covenant writings:

1) Luke 2:11 (literal word order presented here; see passage in AENT for more information)

אֶתְיְלֵד לְכֶון גֵּיר יַומָנָא
For born to you all today

פָּרְקָא דְּאִיתָהוהִי מְרָיָא מְשִׁיחָא בְּמַדִּינְתָּה דְּדָוִיד׃
(is the) Savior that is Master YHWH the Mashiyach in the city of Dawid.

2) John 1:1-4, 14

בִּרְשִׁיתַ אִיתַוהי הָוָא מֶלתָא וְהֶו מֶלתָא אִיתַוהי הָוָא לְוָתַ אַלָהָא וַאלָהָא
אִיתַוהי הָוָא הֶו מֶלתָא: הָנָא אִיתַוהי הָוָא בִּרְשִׁיתַ לְוָתַ אַלָהָא:
כֶּל בְּאִילֶה הָוָא וּבְלְעָדַוהי אָפְלָא חדָא הָוָתַ מְדֶם דַהָוָא:
בֶּה חַיֶא הָוָא וחַיֶא אִיתַיהֶון נָוהָרָא דַבְּנַינָשָא:

In the beginning was the Miltha. And that Miltha was with Elohim.
And Elohim was that Miltha. This was with Elohim in the beginning.
Everything existed through His hands, and without Him, not even one thing existed of the things which have existed. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men…

וּמֶלתָא בְּסָרָא הָוָא וַאגֶן בַּן וַחזַין שֶובחָה
שֶובחָא אַיכ דִיחִידָיָא דִמֶן אַבָא דַמלֶא טַיבֶותָא וקֶושתָא:

And the Miltha became flesh and dwelt among us and we saw His glory,
the glory as the Only-Begotten who is from the Father who is full of grace and truth.

3) John 20:28

וַענָא תָאומַא וְאמַר לֶה מָרי וַאלָהי:
And Tooma answered and said to him, “My Master and my Elohim!”

4) Acts 2:36 (literal word order presented here; see passage in AENT for more information)

שַרִיראִיתַ הָכִיל נֶדַע כֶּלֶה בֵּיתַ אִיסרָיֶל דִמָריָא וַמשִיחָא
עַבַדֶה אַלָהָא לְהָנָא יֶשֶוע דַאנתֶון זקַפתֶון:

Truly, therefore, let all the house of Israel know that Master YHWH and Mashiyach
has made Elohim this Y’shua whom you executed on a stake.

5) Acts 2:38

אָמַר לְהֶון שֶמעֶון תֶובו וַעמַדו אנָש אנָש מֶנכֶון בַּשמֶה דִמָריָא
יֶשֶוע לשֶובקֶן חטָהֶא דַתקַבלֶון מַוהַבתָא דרֶוחָא דקֶודשָא:

Shimon said to them, Repent and be immersed each of you in the name of Master YHWH-
Y’shua for the forgiveness of sins that you may receive the gift of the Ruach haKodesh.

6) Acts 10:36

מֶלתָא גֶיר דשַדַר לַבַני אִיסרָיֶל וסַבַר אֶנֶון שלָמָא
ושַינָא בִידַ יֶשֶוע משִיחָא הָנו מָריָא דכֹל:

(This is) the Word that he sent for to the sons of Yisrael to give hope and peace
and tranquility to them through Y’shua the Mashiyach He is Master YHWH of all!

7) 1 Corinthians 8:6

אֶלָּא לַן דִּילַן חַדׇ הֲו אֲלָהָא אַבָּא דִּכֹּל מְנֶּה וַחנַן בֶּה וחַדׇ מָרְיָא
יֵשֽׁוּע מְשִׁיחָא דִּכֹּל בְּאִידֶּה וְאַף חנַן בְּאִידֶּה׃

Yet to us, on our part, there is one Elohim, the Father from whom are all things,
and we in him; and one Master YHWH-Y'shua, the Mashiyach,
by whom are all things, and we also by him.

8) 1 Corinthians 12:3

מְטֵל הָנָא מַודַּע אֲנָא לְכֹון דְּלֵית אֱנָשׁ דַּבַּרְוחָא דַּאלָהָא מְמַלֶּל וְאָמַר דַּחרֶם הֲו
יֵשֽׁוּע וְאַפְלָא אֱנָשׁ מְשַׁבַּח לְמֵאמַר דִּמָרְיָא הֲו יֵשֽׁוּע אֶלָּא אֶן בְּרוחָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא׃

I therefore explain to you that there is no man that speaks by the Spirit of Elohim
who says that Y'shua is accursed. Neither can a man say that Master YHWH is Y'shua
except by the Ruach haKodesh.

9) 1 Corinthians 15:45-47

הָכַּנָא אַף כְּתִיבׇ הוָא אָדָם בַּרנָשָׁא קַדְמָיָא לַנפֶּש חַיָא וָאדָם אחרָיָא
לְרוחָא מַחיָנִיתָּא׃ אֶלָּא לָא הוָא לֶוקדָם רוחָנָיָא אֶלָּא נַפְשָׁנָיָא וּהָידֵין רוחָנָיָא׃
בַּרנָשָׁא קַדְמָיָא עַפְרָנָא דִּמֶן אַרעָא בַּרנָשָׁא דַּתְרִין מָרְיָא מֶן שמַיָא׃

So also is it written: "Adam, the first man, became a living soul;" the second Adam (became)
a resurrecting spirit. And the spiritual was not first; but the animal, and then the spiritual.
The first man was of dust from the earth; the second man was Master YHWH from heaven.

10) Philippians 2:10-11

דִּבַּשמֶה דִּיֵשֽׁוּע כֶּל בְּרוךְ תֶּכּוּף דִּבַּשמַיָא וּבַּארעָא וּדַּלתַּחת מֶן אַרעָא
וּכֹּל לֶשָׁן נַודֶּא דִּמָרְיָא הו יֵשֽׁוּע מְשִׁיחָא לְשֻׁובחָא דַּאלָהָא אַבֶּוהי

That at the name of Y'shua every knee should bow, of (beings) in heaven and on earth
and under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Master YHWH is Y'shua the
Mashiyach to the glory of Elohim his Father.

11) Colossians 2:8-9

אֶזדַּהרו דַּלמָא אֱנָש נחַלֶּצכֶּון בִּפִילָסָפֶּותָא וּבַּטָעיֶותָא סְרִיקְתָּא
אַיךְ יֶולפָּנֶא דַּבַּנַינָשָׁא וַאיךְ אֶסְטֶוכסַוהי דְּעָלמָא וְלָא אַיךְ
מְשִׁיחָא דִּבֶּה עָמַר כֶּלֶּה מֶולָיָא דַּאלָהֶותָא גֶּושמָנָאִית׃

Beware, or else any man make you naked by philosophy and by vain deception,
according to the doctrines of men, according to the rudiments of the world,
and not according to the Mashiyach, in whom dwells all the fullness of Elohim bodily.

And finally, we must separate certain grammatical issues from deep spiritual truths. Aramaic is a language that often requires extensive re-ordering of words to make them come out in proper syntactical English.

However, those type of necessary switches that happen for clarity's sake are wholly different than certain word orders in key phrases where the actual order must be retained. In the Western mindset, there seems little difference between saying "YHWH is Y'shua" and "Y'shua is YHWH" or, to put the latter in Christian verbiage, "Jesus is Lord".

To the Eastern Aramaic believer however the difference is between night and day. The writers of the Renewed Covenant were either Jewish by birth or perhaps in Luke's case proselytes with extensive training. Either way this imparted a certain historical mindset that was vehemently anti-pagan. So the idea of a man being a god, while very compatible in Roman theology, was anathema to the writers of original the New Testament.

Instead, they wanted to focus on the fact that YHWH allowed His Ruach to be fully manifest in one man and in accordance with His own prophecies in Tanakh. Since no man can have authority over YHWH, it must therefore be totally correct to say that, if such is His will, "YHWH is Y'shua" but never "Y'shua is YHWH" in the sense that Y'shua the man cannot make that decision since all authority comes from his Father without whom he is nothing. As a result, the Aramaic New Testament boldly proclaims in every appropriate place without exception that YHWH is Y'shua, not the other way around.

Divisions of the Day

According to Scripture, the day begins not at midnight nor at sunrise, but at sunset. This is purely ancient understanding, not later Rabbinical innovation; it is supported in both Hebrew Tanakh and Aramaic Peshitta. For the vast majority of Bible students this statement is hardly surprising; however, a small group of people actively work against this idea, creating division and confusion. Others are unclear as to the Scriptural reasons for the day beginning at sunset and believe it simply a later traditional development, even though most accept that the day begins at sunset on that basis.

In the Beginning

"In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of Elohim was hovering over the waters. And Elohim said, "Let there be light," and there was light. Elohim saw that the light was good and he separated the light from the darkness. Elohim called the light (aur--אור) "day," (yom--יום) and the darkness (khoshekh--חשך) he called "night." (layil--לילי) And there was evening (ereb--ערב), and there was morning (boker--בקר)--the first day" (Genesis 1:1-5).

From these very famous passages in Torah, we glean many important facts. The plain (peshat) language tells us:

1. In the beginning it was dark, and light (אור) emerged from that darkness through YHWH's will. As a result, light became separated from that darkness (חשך).
2. Then YHWH gave the light another name, that of *yom* (יום) or "day."
3. Similarly, YHWH then called the darkness by its alternate title *layil* (לילי) or "night."
4. When there is evening (ערב) followed by morning (בקר), this constitutes a fuller version of *yom* which counts as the first day.

Sunrise-sunrise advocates posture that Hebrew could read "and there was evening and *then* there was morning, one day." In other words, Hebrew allows for the interpretation that the real starting point of the first day is *boker*, or dawn. However, other passages in the Tanakh clearly do not agree with this. Furthermore, just because the construction of the sentence allows it to be read,

"*and then there was*" does not mean a separation of the first period from the second. That would be like saying "And there was sports *and then there was* weather during the newscast" as though sports and weather could not be part of the same event! As simplistic as this example sounds, it is even more ridiculous to apply this logic to force *"and then there was"* into a pure separation. Not only are there five more occasions where Genesis 1 uses this construction, but many other places in the Tanakh: *"Hear, O Israel: YHWH is our Elohim, YHWH is one. Love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children.* ***Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up"*** (Deuteronomy 6:4-7). There are two evening-morning cycles mentioned here. The order is when you sit at home, which is usually at night, when you walk along the road, which is usually in the morning, when you lie down in evening and then when you get up in the morning again! This statement, though, from the Psalms is even stronger: "*But I call to Elohim, and YHWH saves me.* ***Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice***" (Psalm 55:16-17).

"You must pay (a laborer) his wages on the same day, before the sun sets." (Deuteronomy 24:15).

The reason is that after sun set is technically another day!

*"Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, 'How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled--**the vision concerning the daily sacrifice**, the rebellion that causes desolation, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?' He said to me, '**It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be re-consecrated'"*** (Daniel 8:13-14).

*"And the vision **of the evenings and mornings** which has been told is true, but keep the vision secret because it pertains to many days in the future"* (Daniel 8:26).

These are the same parts of the greater *yom*, a 24 hour period that begins with sunset.

There's no place like Yom for the holidays

יום, 'YOWM', (#3117), "*daylight, 24 hour day, a working day*", comes from a root meaning *"to be hot."* This can refer either to daylight alone, or to a 24-hour period called the "*day."* An examination of special occasions in the Tanakh reveals the components of a normal day. "*YHWH spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the first month of the second year after they came out of Egypt. He said, '**Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time. Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month**, in accordance with all its rules and regulations.' So Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, and they did so in the Desert of Sinai at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Israelites did everything just as YHWH commanded Moses. But some of them could not celebrate the Passover on that day because they were ceremonially unclean on account of a dead body. So they came to Moses and Aaron that same day and said to Moses, "We have become unclean because of a dead body, but why should we be kept from presenting YHWH's offering with the other Israelites at the appointed time?" Moses answered them, "Wait until I find out what YHWH commands concerning you." Then YHWH said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites: 'When any of you or your descendants are unclean because of a dead body or are away on a journey, they may still celebrate YHWH's Passover.* ***They are to celebrate it on the fourteenth day of the second month at twilight.*** *They are to eat the lamb, together with unleavened bread and bitter herbs'"* (Numbers 9:1-11).

From here two aspects become apparent. First, it is clear that the celebration of the holiday is keyed to sunset, and there is no indication that it is different from a regular day which one would almost expect if the holiday made such a shift. And second, here the "day" includes the night: ***"On that same** (Passover) **night** I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn--both men and animals...**This is a day** you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to YHWH--a lasting ordinance"* (Exodus 12:12-14).

The question is sometimes asked, "If they are slaughtering the Passover Lamb on the fourteenth at twilight, isn't that really the next day, the fifteenth?" No, because this same Hebrew word of *erev* may also refer to the sun in the process of setting, which is the late afternoon on the fourteenth. Others suggest that Passover can then be said to start on the thirteenth, thinking that once it is sunset, it marks "the fourteenth day at the beginning of twilight." Again, the answer is no, because the Torah is clear that it is again "between the evenings" which is the sun beginning to set after the daylight period of the fourteenth day began, and further Torah instruction makes this clear. The order shown is night and then day; "the greater yom" includes the night as the "day" is clearly happening after sunset but before dawn! YHWH adds this confirmation for clarity: *"It is a Sabbath of rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. **From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your Sabbath"*** (Vayikra/Leviticus 23:32)

To clarify which "twilight" is meant for ancient Israel, i.e., the sunset that marked the beginning of the previous (9th) or the one for the day being discussed (10th), YHWH clearly says to go *through* the 9th day and *then celebrate the Shabbat after the sunset on that day*. This is why Yehudim have always adopted this pattern and applied it throughout the Tanakh. In addition, we find the weekly Shabbat also occurring at sunset: ***When evening shadows fell on the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I ordered the doors to be shut and not opened until the Sabbath was over.*** *I stationed some of my own men at the gates so that no load could be brought in on the Sabbath day. Once or twice the merchants and sellers of all kinds of goods spent the night outside Jerusalem.* ***But I warned them and said, "Why do you spend the night by the wall? If you do this again, I will lay hands on you." From that time on they no longer came on the Sabbath****. Then I commanded the Levites to purify themselves and go and guard the gates in order to keep the Sabbath day holy"* (Nehemiah 13:19-22).

Some *"light"* reading

Another way to understand this structure is to remember that, in the beginning: ***Elohim called the light*** (*aur*--אור) ***"day"*** (*yom*--יום***) and the darkness*** (*khoshekh*--חשך) ***he called "night"*** (*layil*--ליל). By the direct reference of this verse, we see "light" and "day" are synonyms, as are "darkness" and "night." Also: "*And Elohim said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.' And it was so.* ***Elohim made two great lights--the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night.*** *He also made the stars. Elohim set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And Elohim saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the fourth day"* (Genesis 1:14-19).

So, if "light" is called "day," and there are "lights" also at night, then it stands to reason that where there is "light" – be it greater or lesser – it is part of the *yom*, or "day"! We see here night and then day, darkness and then light, clearly making up the greater unit which is also called day. There is also a special prophetic *Yom* which will not be confined to a day or nighttime period: *"Then YHWH my Elohim will come, and all the holy ones with him. On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost. It will be a unique day, without daytime or nighttime--a day known to YHWH. When evening comes, there will be light"* (Zechariah 14:1-7).

Watches and Hours

In the First Century, the day was mapped into twelve equal periods of time, or hours, which were demarcated on a sundial, but "hours" would vary in length according to the time of year. So while the daylight had twelve hours, rarely would each hour be equivalent to our modern interval of 60 minutes. The word for "hour" (*shaiah*--שעה) is first referred to in the Aramaic portion of Daniel. In some places a better translation is "brief moment" but that only raises the question as to what "brief" constitutes. The clearest reading is in Daniel 4:19, where the prophet himself is said to have been in a state astonishment for "one hour." A shorter interval of time, perhaps seconds, is

suggested in the Hebrew term *rehgah* (רגע), which is closer to the English word "instant," derived literally from "a winking of the eyes." A more generic time reference in the Aramaic of Daniel is *iddawn* (עדדן), whose root is more closely associated with a woman's menstrual cycle, but which can refer to either a moment or even a year, depending on context. It is this exact root and word which is used throughout early Aramaic writings as well, in the form of the word *shaita* (שעתה). However, prior to these times the day and night were divided into watches. Starting with dawn, it would take a few hours for the sun to heat things up; at around the third hour from dawn, this time was generally known as the beginning of "the heat of the day":

"The next morning Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp at the ***morning watch*** *(just before dawn - AGR) and struck down the Ammonites* ***until the heat of the day****..."* (1 Samuel 11:11).

This verse indicates that the attack began somewhere around 4 AM, and ended about five hours later, when the "heat of the day" began. However, the time period continued from that point until late afternoon. At that time, prior to sunset we would have "the cool of the day" (Genesis 3:8). Finally, the mid point of this time from dawn to late afternoon was called "midday." The Hebrew word for "noon," *tzohar* (צהר), is from a primitive root that means "roof," or the time when the sun is directly overhead. As for the night, it was divided into three parts.

First, there was the period from sunset to midnight: *"Arise, cry aloud in the night* ***at the beginning of the night watches****; pour out your heart like water before the presence of YHWH; Lift up your hands to Him for the life of your little ones who are faint because of hunger at the head of every street"* (Lamentations 2:19).

Then from midnight until the roosters began crowing*: "****Now the same night*** *it came about that YHWH said to him, 'Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hands'… So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp* ***at the beginning of the middle watch****, when they had just posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the pitchers that were in their hands"* (Judges 7:9, 19).

Finally, from the rooster crowing until sunrise: *"****At the morning watch****, YHWH looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion… So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea,* ***and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak,*** *while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then YHWH overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea"* (Exodus 14:24, 27).

By Y'shua's time, the Hebrews had added a fourth watch, as noted in Mark 13:35.

The many faces of EREV

Erev has many different meanings; the most common ones are "even, eventide, evening, and mixing." It is derived from *arav* which also means "to darken, or to cover with a texture." *Erev* also has several figurative meanings which include the sense of "ending" or "closure"; therefore, it is important to know how to determine a literal from a figurative use of this word. Scriptural evidence also shows *erev* can refer to late afternoon; it is derived from the same root that describes mixing, particularly of shades of light and darkness (Exodus 12:38). It is precisely the mixing of daylight transitioning to night as the sun sets. We will also see later how the meaning "to darken" relates directly to the Aramaic NT and its equivalent term *ramsha*, as we review a passage in Luke. The daylight can be said to start closing or setting, another meaning of *erev*: "Prepare war against her; Arise, and let us ***attack at noon***. Woe to us, ***for the day declines*** (*panah*--פנה), ***for the shadows of the evening*** (*erev*--ערב) ***lengthen***!" (Jeremiah 6:4)

How does the "day" decline, or go into *panah*? Because noon is counted as the mid-point from dawn, the daylight-only form of *yom*. From there it's a very smooth transition to the "going down" or setting of the day period. But notice another aspect to this key verse as well: Erev is

defined as the first time that the shadows lengthen past mid-day. Other verses in Tanakh show a clear separation of time between first erev and sunset*: "He hanged the king of Ai on a tree* ***until evening*** (*erev*--ערב)*;* ***and at sunset*** (*bow ha-shemesh*—בוא השמש) *Joshua gave command and they took his body down from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the city gate and raised over it a great heap of stones to this day"* (Joshua 8:29). *"The battle raged that day, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot in front of the Arameans* ***until the evening*** (*erev*--ערב)*;* ***and at sunset*** (*bow hashemesh* —בוא השמש) *he died"* (2 Chronicles 18:34). In both these cases the "first erev" is before sunset, or as the sun is going down. If *erev* only referred to a literal sunset, there would be no need for another additional term right after it! *Erev* is clearly ***not*** being understood here as "the time after sunset and before darkness."

Even more precisely we read: *'You shall keep (the lamb) until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it* ***between the evenings*** (*beyn ha eruvim*-- בין הערבים). *Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.* ***That same night*** *they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire-head, legs and inner parts.* ***Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it"*** (Exodus 12:6-10). It is *beyn ha eruvim*, or between the *evenings*--plural. Then after these two evenings we have night, followed by morning. Therefore, since we know the latest *erev* is at sunset, it stands to reason that the previous *erev* must be in the late afternoon, or the difference between a setting sun and one that has just gone down.

The final "face" of *erev* that we must address is the sense of closing of an occasion of time, as we find here: *Thus says YHWH concerning the prophets who lead my people astray; 'When they have to bite with their teeth, they cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths they declare holy war.* ***Therefore night for you--without vision, and darkness for you--without divination. The sun will go down on the prophets, and the day will become dark over them'"*** (Micah 3:5-6). And it also works for dawn, in the sense that people will or will not have renewal based on their deeds: *"When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their Elohim? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony!* ***If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.*** *Distressed and hungry, they will roam through the land; when they are famished, they will become enraged and, looking upward, will curse their king and their Elohim. Then they will look toward the earth and see only distress and darkness and fearful gloom, and they will be thrust into utter darkness"* (Isaiah 8:19-22). *"Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty* ***from the womb of the dawn you will receive the dew of your youth"*** (Psalm 110:3).

These metaphors are also carried over in the Ketuvim Netzarim: *"Be angry, but do not sin. Do not let the* ***sun go down*** (*nerev*-- נגיב) *upon your wrath"* (Ephesians 4:26). *"And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it,* ***as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts"*** (2 Peter 1:19-20). In Aramaic there are two words that stand in for *erev* and its various meanings. They are *eruvata* (ܥܪܘܒܬܐ), the direct cognate from the Hebrew, and the Aramaic-exclusive term *ramsha* (ܪܡܫܐ) which we will review next along with other Aramaic equivalents for Hebrew Tanakh time markers.

Hebrew Tanakh into Aramaic Renewed Covenant Writings

As we move from Tanakh and into the Aramaic, many of the Hebrew terms we've discussed are carried over: *Boker Shapira/Tzapira or Negeh*: Morning, dawn or daybreak; *Aur Nohra*: Light; *Yom Yom*: Daylight period or sunset-sunset 24 hour period; *Erev Erev/Erubata, Ramsha*: Late afternoon or evening/sunset; *Layil Layila/Lalia*: Night; *Machar Machar*.

As previewed earlier, *ramsha* dovetails with the "between the evenings": *"Now when it became ramsha (evening), a rich man from Ramtha whose name was Yosip who also was taught by Y'shua, this man drew near to Peelatos and asked for the body of Y'shua. And Peelatos commanded that the body be given to him"* (Matthew 27:57-58). There is also a "straight" *erev* in Aramaic, spelled exactly like the Hebrew and taking the form *nerev* (let set) in Ephesians 4:26. In this case the first *erev* is indicated because 27:62 says the sunset happened later, literally phrased as *l'yoma din machar d'aytohi beter eruvata*, or "the next day that was after sunset." The same clarification is given in Mark 1:32 which reads *b'ramsha din b'merevi shemsha,* or "in the evening during the setting of the sun." In both cases there would be no need to make the distinction if the sunrise-sunrise model were the correct one! Only when we have *yom* referring to the overall structure beginning at sunset does this phraseology make sense. In addition, we need to see that the word *ramsha* is attached to the daylight when it is "first erev" but other times to the night when it is "second erev."

Here's proof: *"**And at ramsha on that day*** he (Y'shua) said to them, *'Let us cross over to the other side'"* (Mark 4:35). The events in Mark 4 are clearly during daylight, so here as in Mark 1:32, the sun can be in the process of setting, which is by definition not the actual moment of sunset. On the other hand, the second meaning of *ramsha* is also represented in Mark: *"Be vigilant therefore because you do not know when the master of the house will come – **In ramsha or in the middle of the night or at the crow of the rooster, or in the morning**"* (Mark 13:35).

Here is an example of this other meaning, because these are four watches that belong to the ***night***, not the previous *erev* that belongs to the day. In those other instances, the day is said to be "in setting," i.e. giving way to sunset. Here sunset begins the timing of the watches mentioned. Perhaps the strongest example is in Mark 14:30: *"Y'shua said to him, 'Amen, I say to you that **today in this night** you will deny me three times before the cock will crow.'"* The Aramaic here reads literally *yomana b'lalia hana qedem* (***this day in the night before***). The rooster crows ***before*** dawn, so the day must begin prior to that time, at sunset! Furthermore, the timing of this incident is clearly established as coming first. This use of *machar* disproves any idea that the word never refers to the "greater yom" where the day begins after sunset. To say "the next day after sunset" is to clearly differentiate that "day" from the *boker* at sunrise; hence, bringing us back again to "and it was *erev* and it was *boker*, day one." See also Matthew 14:25 and Mark 6:48, *ramsha/evening* (Mark 14:17) and then *b'hana lalia* or "in this ***night***" (Mark 14:27), immediately after which Y'shua calls it "today"! Similar wording is found in Luke 22:34, *niqara taragala yomana* (***will crow the rooster this day***).

Not your "average Joe"

If Joseph of Ramtha came "in the evening" how could he have the time necessary to get Y'shua's body off the stake, prepared and put in the tomb before sunset? For many sunrise-sunrise advocates, this is the foundational "proof" of their theory. For them, it is impossible for Joseph to do all the things mentioned in the Good News, even if they accepted the "between the evenings" understanding. They point out that Joseph had to be informed and know Y'shua was near death, then get approval from Pilate, procure the massive amounts of burial spices, and so on. Let's carefully examine the logistics: *"And a certain man whose name was Yosip, **a counselor from Ramtha**, a city of Yehud, was a good and righteous man. **This man did not agree with their will and with their actions**, **and was awaiting the Kingdom of Elohim**. This man drew near to Peelatos and asked for the body of Y'shua"* (Luke 23:50-52).

*"After these things Yosip, who was from Ramtha, pleaded from Peelatos that he might take the body of Y'shua **because he was a disciple of Y'shua and had concealed himself for fear of the Yehudeans.** And Peelatos gave permission, and he came and took the body of Y'shua. And Niqodemus also came, he who had come previously to Y'shua at night. **And he brought with him spices of myrrh and of aloe, about one hundred pints**"* (John 19:38-39).

These verses, along with what was highlighted earlier from Matthew 27:57-58, reveal important facts about Yosip: 1) He was a wealthy and member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council: 2) He disagreed with the Sanhedrin's decision to hand Y'shua over to the Romans for execution: 3) He was a secret disciple of Y'shua, who was taught directly by him: 4) He was awaiting the "Kingdom of Elohim" – a very specific term of the Netzarim (Acts 24:12-14), characterizing someone who believes Tanakh prophecy as being fulfilled in Y'shua: 5) He is joined by Nicodemus, another secret disciple and fellow Sanhedrin member.

In light of these facts, Yosip was very well positioned as someone who could take custody of Y'shua's body. As members of the Sanhedrin, both Joseph and Nicodemus were privy to the details of the arrest and trial of Y'shua. As disciples of their Master, they were also in a position to be trusted by Y'shua and his inner circle. And because they are both wealthy, it would be easy to plan and procure the spices needed to bury their Master whenever he died, knowing that both were powerless to stop the execution. Pilate, the Roman governor, had to work directly with the Sanhedrin to maintain order. It is also the Passover, a time of extreme unrest in the land where Jewish celebrations of freedom from Egypt could very easily be transferred to rising up to break the Roman yoke. Pilate clearly does not want to be in Jerusalem; he would rather be at Caesarea. The reason he had to come up at this time was to maintain his own position which would be endangered if riots broke out or if the flow of tax to Rome was disrupted. To keep order, Pilate complied with these two men who asked for the body; they were very well known throughout Israel and of excellent reputation. It would have been in the best interests of the bureaucratic machinery to comply and not impede the request.

"Daylight Savings Time"

Another key fact is this: It was not a normal day as far as *ramsha/ereb* is concerned:

*"**Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour,** Y'shua cried out with a loud voice and said, "My El! My El! Why have you spared me?"* (Matthew 27:45-46) *"And about six hours had passed and darkness was over all the land until the ninth hour. **And the sun darkened** and the veil of the temple was torn from its middle"* (Luke 23:44-45).

From these verses we know: 1) It was after the mid-day began, or the sixth hour, when darkness fell over the land. 2) We are specifically told the ***sun darkened***. The *question* is, what does Scripture call such an event, and by what term? *"In that day," declares the Master YHWH, **"I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.** I will turn your religious feasts into mourning and all your singing into weeping. I will make all of you wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that time like mourning for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day"* (Amos 8:9-10). The word used here is *bow* (בוא), which literally means "to set" and is a synonym for *erev*. Then *erev,* in turn, is rendered into Aramaic as *ramsha.* Furthermore, we should remember that one of the original meanings of *erev/ramsha* is simply "to darken"! The sixth hour then, in three of the Gospels, is being described as the transition time between when the sun darkens and when it sets; only this time it's happening hours earlier.

This scenario was referenced earlier: *"Prepare war against her; Arise, and let us **attack at noon**. Woe to us, **for the day declines, for the shadows of the erev lengthen!"*** (Jeremiah 6:4) This appears to be exactly what the prophets are describing; the time is after the sixth hour, or noon. And then the sun darkens, the shadows lengthen – spread throughout the land! The word used is *erev* or *ramsha*! Hearkening back to another definition of *erev* also, we see this moment at the sixth hour as a "mixing" of light and darkness, also a very apt description of what is going on here.

Finally, from a linguistic standpoint, we need to consider the words in Matthew 27:57, *kad hwa din ramsha*, which can indeed be translated as *"now when it was evening."* However, the word

din also carries several other meanings, including "while", "yet" or even just plain "and." As a result, the plain reading of the text more than allows for the clearer rendering of *"when it was still ramsha,"* which would clearly indicate Matthew viewing the supernatural darkness as a very early *first erev*. Even the previous reading, though, also reinforces this idea. That being the case, Joseph of Aramathea had plenty of time from when he consulted with Pilate, along with his friend Nicodemus who brought spices along with him.

As for logistical considerations, Pilate was very nearby the execution site, with his "common hall" being in the Antonia Fortress on the grounds of the Temple, while the execution site was just outside the city walls. Pilate was surprised Y'shua had already died and sent a soldier to check on him (Mark 15:44-45), and this would have added an extra bit of time. However, a Roman Centurion could have easily made a round trip to the execution area in thirty minutes or less, or within minutes on horseback. The Centurion would easily see that Y'shua was in fact dead with the blood and water poured out on the ground. Therefore, both the death of Y'shua and the granting of permission to Joseph could have fit within the ninth hour. Pilate's sole concern was to verify his death; he had otherwise made up his mind. Armed with the approval, Joseph and Nicodemus go to the stake, probably early in the tenth hour, still allowing time to prepare and place the body of their Master in the tomb.

What about John?

In John's account we have the phrase, *beter haleyn Yosip*, or *"after these things Joseph,"* linking the arrival of the counselor to "after" the death of Y'shua on the stake. John is the only writer who was actually at the execution site (John 19:26, 35). Therefore, when he talks about ***the arrival of Joseph of Aramathea*, he means at the stake**, *not about his arrival to Pilate.* Furthermore, Mark 15:42 goes out of the way to inform us it was still daylight but in "evening" or *first erev*. Luke 23:50-55 does the same but does not mention Joseph's arrival was "after" anything. However, the most important details rest with John: 1) That Y'shua is condemned about the sixth hour of the *day* of Preparation, which other Gospels say always, "is before the Sabbath" (John 19:14, compare to Mark 15:42 and Luke 23:54); 2) That Y'shua is buried *on that same day before sunset* (John 19:42) but still "at evening" which must mean late afternoon (Matthew 27:57). When we combine these facts with those in the previous section, it becomes clear that "after these things" means that to synch John with the other accounts puts Joseph's arrival ***at the stake*** at the tenth hour, and it is at the tenth hour of the day that generally fits the late afternoon time line and specifically fits even better when we consider the "first erev" beginning four hours earlier. Two hours before sunset is still plenty of time to get Y'shua buried, especially since the Gospels tell us how near the actual tomb was.

And the Sabbath was dawning?

Analysis of each context and the usage of specific terms indicates the use of dawning and setting as metaphors for opening and closing an occasion, and we have seen several examples from Scripture about how that works. Even so, sunrise-sunrise advocates point to a reading in the Greek that says, in two places, "The Sabbath was dawning." The word used for "dawn" is ***epiphosko*** and it literally means "growing light." The idea is that if the Sabbath is tied to the literal dawn, then the day must start at sunrise.

However, almost all Greek NT primacists recognize this phrase as an Aramaic or Hebraic expression and render it "and the Sabbath was beginning" in their versions of Matthew 28:1 and John 19:31. A quick survey of the two dozen most popular NT translations of those verses more than proves this point.

But it should also be pointed out that in this edition of the AENT, we have restored the meaning of a key Aramaic word that got mistranslated into Greek as ***epiphosko***, from which nearly 2,000 years of misunderstandings have resulted on when Y'shua actually died!

Most Greek translations posit that Y'shua either died on a Friday afternoon or before the coming of the Annual Shabbat of the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15th of Abib. Neither position is correct. A quick look at several key footnotes in places like Matthew 28:1, Luke 23:54 and John 19:14,31 and 42, more than proves this point. The key word, ***erubata***, is derived from Hebrew ***ereb*** and as we saw earlier this means "to mix light" and also "to set".

From ***epiphosko***, or "growing light" we see exactly where the bad translation happened. If light is mixing, the only thing it can mix with is shade or darkness. If the light is then "freeing" itself from that darkness that light could be said to "grow", but this is far too much of a stretch for the Semitic word that epiphosko was translated from. Somehow, "mixing light" got mangled into "growing light", and the intended meaning of closing or setting from ***ereb/erubata*** was lost.

However, this proper context is recovered in at least one key definitive resource. Compendious Syriac by Payne Smith (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1903) says of this word (p. 427) "to cause to set as the sun…metaphorically, of souls caused to go down into sleep or death". Therefore, many things, including the day or afternoon, can be said to "close" or "set" from this mixing of light in a Semitic context, and the Greek reading simply got a bit confused.

But whether by Greek or Aramaic primacist model, the problem for the sunrise advocate is the same: The dawning is not meant literally!

However, it should be pointed out that even though there is no conflict between the Greek or Aramaic in naming the day, neither version discredits the plain reading of this verse which is literally: "and when it became the ramsha that was setting." So evening itself, whether first ereb or second, can be said to set or give way, or close. This is also how we understand the Peshitta reading above in light of the Greek for this same verse: "Opse de Shabbaton in the dawning of the first of the week…" (Matthew 28:1 Greek). That phrase may also indicate that while John does not mention the three hours of darkness in his Gospel, he nevertheless is aware of it and using it to synch the time. The phrase Opse de Shabbaton is taken to mean in nearly all translations "closing/after the Sabbath" as well as "evening" where ramsha appears on the Aramaic side. Therefore, the Greek is actually covering and giving witness to both literal and figurative uses. In fact the Aramaic of Mark 16:1 may very well reflect an attempt at clarifying and making the right choice for Matthew 28:1.

Conclusion

To summarize, the only way to allege that a sunrise-sunrise model is supported in the Aramaic New Testament – which in turn "clarifies" the Tanakh to this position – is to use terms out of context by not discerning when literal or figurative meanings are intended. There are no Aramaic or Hebrew speaking congregations – Netzari, Messianic, Christian or otherwise who have studied the sacred text over the last 2,000 years, and deviated from the traditional Jewish understanding of what makes up the day and when it begins. No advocate of the sunrise-sunrise model can prove when and why this alleged day-switching supposedly happened. If the traditional reckoning of the day was changed as these folks suggest, then where is this alleged mass conspiracy recorded in history? If Mashiyach had advocated or adopted such a practice it would have angered the Jewish establishment and brought much accusation against him and his disciples, but there is nothing whatsoever found in Jewish writings. Sunrise-sunrise advocates reference a story regarding Rashi's grandson Samuel Ben Meir observing that the "day" began with ereb and not "night" but this matter is purely of modern speculation. There is no evidence that either Rashi or his grandson adopted the day beginning at sunrise.

Easter or Pesach

In most Bibles the term *paskha* is understood to mean Passover; it occurs twenty-nine times in the Renewed Covenant Writings. There is good reason for this: It is the same exact word for Passover from the Greek, the Hebrew original being *pesach*. However in Acts 12:4 the King James Bible adds the word "Easter": "***intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people***". Most Bible scholars assume that the word "Easter" is derived from the Greek *paskha* but this is certainly ***not*** the case.

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance defines *paskha* as: *pas'-khah* Noun. Neuter Definition: the paschal sacrifice (which was accustomed to be offered for the people's deliverance of old from Egypt) the paschal lamb, i.e. the lamb the Israelites were accustomed to slay and eat on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan (the first month of their year) in memory of the day on which their fathers, preparing to depart from Egypt, were bidden by God to slay and eat a lamb, and to sprinkle their door posts with its blood, that the destroying angel, seeing the blood, might pass over their dwellings; Christ crucified is likened to the slain paschal lamb, the paschal supper, the paschal feast, the feast of the Passover, extending from the 14th to the 20th day of the month of Nisan. King James Word Usage - Total: 29 – Passover 28, Easter 1.

Paskha is mentioned in: Matthew 26:2, 17-19; Mark 14:1, 12, 14, 16; Luke 2:41; Luke 22:1, 7-8, 11,13, 15; John 2:13; John 2:23: John 4:45; John 6:4; John 11:55; John 12:1; John 13:1; John 18:28; John 18:39; John 19:14; Acts 12:4; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:28. Note that in John 19:14 that Pesach (Passover) is clearly being addressed. If "Easter" was being referred to as the "holiday" it could hardly pose a security threat for Herod. However, a Jewish festival that commemorates freedom from a foreign power obviously forced Rome to take extra measures to prevent riots and an uprising against them. This is also why Pilate offered to free one prisoner during Pesach to placate a potentially volatile situation. The NIV renders *paskha* in Acts 12:4 as Passover. In fact, KJV stands alone in scholarly dishonesty by inserting Easter, as the root and usage of *paskha/pesach* is self evident.

Tracking the Origins of Easter

Easter is an occasion that happens in the early Spring and is described in considerable detail within Scripture. It is not something that would have been foreign to people in the land of Israel during the First Century. It is an occasion replete with imagery relating to life, death and resurrection. Two of the most prestigious Christian Bible dictionaries define "Easter" as follows:

Easter [S]: Originally a Saxon word (Eostre), denoting a goddess of the Saxons, in honor of whom sacrifices were offered about the time of the Passover. Hence the name came to be given to the festival of the Resurrection of Christ, which occurred at the time of the Passover. In the early English versions this word was frequently used as the translation of the Greek *paskha* (the Passover). When the Authorized Version (1611) was formed, the word "Passover" was used in all passages in which this word *paskha* occurred, except in Acts 12:4. ***In the Revised Version the proper word, "Passover," is always used.*** (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

...intending after Easter - rather, 'after the Passover'; that is, after the whole festival was over. (***The word in our King James Version is an ecclesiastical term of later date, and ought not to have been employed here***). (Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible (Jamiesson, Faucett and Brown), Acts 12:4)

Easton's Bible Dictionary states that Easter was the name of a Saxon goddess that was applied to the resurrection of Y'shua. The timing of pagan sacrifices were synchronized somewhat to Passover. Jamiesson, Faucett and Brown state that the King James translators should not have adopted the Easter reading in what is for them the "Authorized Version." The Catholic position on this matter is as follows:

"The English term, according to the Venn. Bead (De tempo rum rationed, I, v), ***relates to Ester, a Teutonic goddess of the rising light of day and spring***, which deity, however, is otherwise unknown, even in the Eddo (Smock, Mythoi., 362); Anglo-Saxon, Easter, Easton; Old High German, rostra, strata, stratum; German, Astern. April was called easter-monadh..."

"Because the use of eggs was forbidden during Lent, they were brought to the table on Easter Day, colored red to symbolize the Easter joy. This custom is found not only in the Latin but also in the Oriental Churches. "The symbolic meaning of a new creation of mankind by Jesus risen from the dead was probably an invention of later times. The custom may have its origin in paganism, for a great many pagan customs, celebrating the return of spring, gravitated to Easter. The egg is the emblem of the germinating life of early spring. Easter eggs, the children are told, come from Rome with the bells which on Thursday go to Rome and return Saturday morning." (Catholic Encyclopedia)

Catholic literature clearly states that some facets of its Easter celebrations were derived from paganism; however, most "reform" movements still follow their "mother church" by using the detestable name of Easter and practicing fertility rites.

Tanakh makes reference to Easter

By transliterating the word Eostre/Ester into Hebrew, we arrive with the name and root word of ***Astarte/Ishtar***, a pagan fertility goddess who is also known as ***Asherah*** and ***Ashtoreth*** in the Tanakh. Ashtoreth was a moon goddess. The moon was linked with fertility; *Ashtoreth* was Baal/ Molech's consort. From Easton's Bible Dictionary:

Ashtoreth: The moon goddess of the Phoenicians, representing the passive principle in nature, ***their principal female deity; frequently associated with the name of Baal, the sun-god, their chief male deity*** Judges10:6; 1 Samuel 7:4; 12:10). These names often occur in the plural (Ashtaroth, Baalim), probably as indicating either different statues or different modifications of the deities. This deity is spoken of as Ashtoreth of the Zidonians. ***She was the Ishtar of the Accadians and the Astarte of the Greeks*** (Jeremiah 44:17; 1 Kings 11:5, 33; 2 Kings 23:13). There was a temple of this goddess among the Philistines in the time of Saul (1 Samuel 31:10). Under the name of Ishtar, she was one of the great deities of the Assyrians. The Phoenicians called her Astarte. Solomon introduced the worship of this idol (1 Kings 11:33). Jezebel's 400 priests were probably employed in its service (1 Kings 18:19). It was called the "queen of heaven" (Jeremiah 44:25).

The variances between these goddess' names in terms of pronunciation are directly related to the region and dialect of Israel, Canaan and Babylon, respectively. Easton's Dictionary states:

"Asherah, and pl. Asherim in Revised Version, instead of "grove" and "groves" of the Authorized Version. ***This was the name of a sensual Canaanitish goddess Astarte, the feminine of the Assyrian Ishtar***. Its symbol was the stem of a tree deprived of its boughs, and rudely shaped into an image, and planted in the ground. Such religious symbols ("groves") are frequently alluded to in Scripture (Exodus 34:13; Judges 6:25; 2 Kings 23:6; 1 Kings 16:33, etc.). These images were also sometimes made of silver or of carved stone (2 Kings 21:7; "the graven image of Asherah," RSV). (See GROVE [1])."

Brown, Driver Briggs Hebrew Lexicon states: Ashera(h) = "groves (for idol worship)" a Babylonian (Astarte)-Canaanite goddess (of fortune and happiness), ***the supposed consort of Baal***…sacred trees or poles set up near an altar.

The *Tanakh* (Hebrew Scriptures) makes reference to these pagan goddesses in numerous places: *"And YHWH will strike Israel, so that it will be like a reed swaying in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land that he gave to their forefathers and scatter them beyond the River, because they provoked YHWH to anger by making* Asherah *poles...They also set up for themselves*

high places, sacred stones and Asherah *poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree"* (1 Kings 14:15, 23).

"Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, *who eat at Jezebel's table"* (1 Kings 18:19).

"When all this had ended, the Israelites who were there went out to the towns of Judah, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah *poles. They destroyed the high places and the altars throughout Judah and Benjamin and in Ephraim and Manasseh. After they had destroyed all of them, the Israelites returned to their own towns and to their own property"* (2 Chronicles 31:1).

"By this, then, will Jacob's guilt be atoned for, and this will be the full fruitage of the removal of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones to be like chalk stones crushed to pieces, no Asherah *poles or incense altars will be left standing"* (Isaiah 27:9).

"I will uproot from among you your Asherah *poles and demolish your cities*" (Micah 5:14).

See also: Exodus 34:13; Deuteronomy 7:5, 12:3, 16:21; Judges 6:25, 26, 28, 30; 1 Kings 15:13, 16:33; 2 Kings 17:10, 16, 18:4, 21:3, 7, 23:4, 6, 7, 14,15; 2 Chronicles 14:3, 15:16, 17:6, 19:3, 24:18, 33:3, 19; Isaiah 17:8.

Clearly there is an Easter festival mentioned in the Set Apart Scriptures and it is very clearly an abomination unto YHWH and His Mashiyach! Seeing also a consistent linkage of Asherah with poles, trees and groves, a very similar "feast" is mentioned in Tanakh that has been co-opted into another very well known Christian holiday:

"Hear what YHWH says to you, O house of Israel. This is what YHWH says: "Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them. For the customs of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel. They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter. Like a scarecrow in a melon patch, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good." *No one is like you, O YHWH; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like you.* They are all senseless and foolish; they are taught by worthless wooden idols. *Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. What the craftsman and goldsmith have made is then dressed in blue and purple-- all made by skilled workers. But YHWH is the true Elohim; he is the living Elohim, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath. "Tell them this: 'These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens'"* (Jeremiah 10:1-11).

Asherah/Astarte/Eostre/Ester derived her power from her male counterpart Baal who, not be outdone, had a festival of his own under his other title Molech:

"As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to YHWH his Elohim, as the heart of David his father had been. ***He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.*** *So Solomon did evil in the eyes of YHWH ; he did not follow YHWH completely, as David his father had done. On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods"* (1 Kings 11:4-8) Notice that Ashtoreth (another name for Asherah), is linked to her consort Baal, here alternatively named Molech.

Here is what YHWH caused to happen to that "old time religion": *"He also tore down the quarters of the male shrine prostitutes, which were in the temple of YHWH* and where women

did weaving for Asherah. *Josiah brought all the priests from the towns of Judah and desecrated the high places, from Geba to Beersheba, where the priests had burned incense. He broke down the shrines at the gates--at the entrance to the Gate of Joshua, the city governor, which is on the left of the city gate. Although the priests of the high places did not serve at the altar of YHWH in Jerusalem, they ate unleavened bread with their fellow priests. He desecrated Topheth, which was in the Valley of Ben Hinnom,* ***so no one could use it to sacrifice his son or daughter in the fire to Molech****"* (2 Kings 23:7-10). Notice that the pagan priests were associating their festivals with the unleavened bread of Passover season, just as they did with the European version of the same fertility goddess who gives Easter her name.

Christian carry-over

Christianity has transferred pagan rites and the very name of a pagan celebration into the Resurrection of Mashiyach! To top off their celebrations most Christians dishonor the Jewish Mashiyach by putting a "traditional" Easter ham on their tables! This is a clear and defiant demonstration of disrespect toward Mashiyach Y'shua, yet Easter and its trappings is painted by the majority of Christians as acceptable behavior for Christians. Christ-ian means to be "Christ-like" but Easter and its pagan trappings are entirely against Mashiyach!

Renewed Covenant writings clearly warn against the same consort of Asherah and all form of paganism: *"But Elohim turned away and gave them over to the worship of the heavenly bodies. This agrees with what is written in the book of the prophets: "'Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?* ***You have lifted up the shrine of Molech and the star of your god Rephan, the idols you made to worship. Therefore I will send you into exile*** *beyond Babylon"* (Acts 7:42-43).

"I ask then: Did Elohim reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. Elohim did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah--how he appealed to Elohim against Israel: "Master YHWH, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"? And what was Elohim's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." *So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace"* (Romans 11:1-5).

"Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: ***You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.*** *Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth…I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first. Nevertheless, I have this against you:* ***You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.*** *I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her into a coffin, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. I will strike her children dead. Then all the assemblies will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds"* (Revelation 2:14-16, 20-23).

Note that Balaam mentioned here is not the false god Baal, nor is this Jezebel woman the same as the nemesis of Elijah. However, these names being referenced in Revelation draw very clear and direct links to the Tanakh and are certainly ***not*** coincidental!

If any Christian reader should still believe it acceptable to co-opt practices of pagan origin to honor Mashiyach Y'shua, then Rav Shaul addresses such shameful indifference with these words:

"Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to Elohim, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of YHWH and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the YHWH's table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse YHWH's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?" (1 Corinthians 10:19-22)

The earliest record of Christians celebrating Easter is in connection with the visit of Polycarp (the bishop of Smyrna) to Anicetus (the bishop of Rome) in 154-155 AD for the purposes of maintaining Pesach observance. Polycarp was a disciple of John. He was known to have discourse with the original disciples of Mashiyach and he was a faithful follower of Mashiyach for eighty six years. Polycarp represented the ancient observance of Pesach through the night of the fourteenth of Nisan (the first month of the Jewish calendar), which is both the Torah and the Renewed Covenant Passover, regardless of what day of the week it might fall on our Gregorian calendars. Anicetus argued for a new calendar that would cause "Easter" to always fall on a Sunday. By changing the original date for Pesach, which Mashiyach and all his original disciples followed, the post-apostolic founders of the church used a syncretistic effort to bring paganism into the pews, which is clearly the work of the "anti-Christ."

Conclusion: What shall be done then?

All followers of Mashiyach must with full assurance mark and celebrate the death, burial and resurrection of Mashiyach Y'shua which occurred on Pesach (Passover). If this feast seems "too Jewish" Christians would be well advised to consider whether they prefer to follow the Messiah who came through the Tribe of Judah, or a Messiah who is a product of pagan culture. Rather than following dates and feasts that accommodate pagan culture, true Christians (Christ-like ones) are called to imitate Mashiyach who gave his life to raise up a Set Apart people.

John writes: *"After these things, I saw another Messenger come down from heaven; and he had great authority and the earth was illuminated by his glory. And he cried with a strong voice, saying: "**Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great**: and has become a cavern of demons, and the home of every unclean spirit, and the home of every unclean and hateful bird and the home of every unclean and hateful beast of prey. For all the nations have drunken of the wine of her wrath; and the kings of the earth have practiced whoredom with her; and the merchants of the earth have been enriched by the abundance of her luxuries. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying: "Come out of her my people; that you may not participate in her sins, and may not partake of her plagues. For her sins have reached up to heaven; and Elohim has remembered her iniquities. Recompense you to her, as she also has recompensed; and render to her double, according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix you to her two fold. As much as she pleased herself with lusting, so much of anguish and sorrow give you to her. Because she says in her heart, 'I sit a queen, and am no widow, and I will see no sorrow;' therefore, in one day, will these her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she will be burned with fire: for strong is Master YHWH, Elohim, who judges her."*(Revelation 18:1-8).

All of us understand the metaphor behind, *"Come out of her (Babylon) my people."* It refers to all false religious authority and ideals, but most don't realize that this passage is also very literal: *"With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of Elohim. Stand fast in it. She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark"* (1 Peter 5:12-13).

Keefa (Peter) is writing from Babylon, where a group of ex-pagans have turned to Mashiyach and are gathered together in the name of YHWH. One must remember that Babylon was home to the largest population of Jews who lived outside of Israel. Keefa and Mark, in fact, viewed their mission to the Babylonian assembly as so critical that it is very likely Keefa's testimony took shape here, eventually becoming the Gospel According to Mark. This assembly would become part of the group that preserved the original Aramaic New Testament. Today we know them as the Church of the East (COE), but originally they were called an Assembly of the Nazarenes! This body of believers literally had to flee Babylon as it was rife with paganism. While some may criticize the COE understandably for adopting Western traditions, one fact is indisputable:

These Aramaic Christians knew the truth regarding the origin of "Easter" and they ran from it as fast as they could! Instead, they marked the occasion of Y'shua's great triumph by honoring it as *Qyamteh D'Maran* (Resurrection Day).

"Easter" is clearly the "sacred" female partner of two deities that are associated with murdering children; therefore, at a minimum the pagan name of Easter must die from the lips of every true Christian! There is, however, another level that takes the occasion of the Resurrection to a much purer place: Celebrating the Passover as Y'shua and his followers originally did, and as Rav Shaul and other Netzarim continued to do for decades afterwards, even to this day. Every true Believer should celebrate Passover according to the true Gospel that is from everlasting, which is the Word of YHWH, not the traditions of men!

Y'shua said, ***"Blessed are those who do His Commandments, for they shall be given the right to the Tree of Life and will be allowed to enter into the city"*** (Revelation 22:14).

The 450 Years of Acts 13:20

The period of the Judges is one of the most difficult to verify chronologically. However, there is no contradiction between the 480 years from the Exodus to Solomon's 4th year (1 Kings 6:1), and the linear calculations from Moshe through Solomon that yield a number closer to 600 years. Three factors must be included in the calculations:

1) Events in Judges 17-21 do not take place after Samson's death but are a separate summary of events from the beginning of that period. Phinehas cannot possibly serve as a priest at the beginning of Judges and then 300+ years later (20:28). The descendants of Phinehas who ministered after him are recorded in 1 Chronicles 6. 2) Judges 11:26 demands 340 years elapse between the Exodus and some part of Jephtah's rule. 3) Judges provides the record of civilian rulers who were simultaneously serving with the priestly rulers (Eli and Samuel). The entire chronology for the Judges begins in 1392 BCE with Joshua's death and brings us to when Eli was judge from 1122-1082 BCE. Within that 40 year period we must determine when Samuel was born and his age when Eli died in 1082 BCE.

1 Samuel 3:19-4:1 says Samuel was both a prophet and a priest (by performing sacrifices), however at the same time he was also proclaimed a judge (1 Samuel 7:1-6). This suggests an age of 25 (Numbers 8:23-26). But since 2 Chronicles 31:15-17 suggests a minimum age of 30 let's average these ages to 27 (1 Samuel 6:1 would put this 7 months after Eli's death). He could easily be a bit older, but not any younger. Samuel's birth then would be in Eli's 13th year, or about 1109 BCE. As for fixing his death, 1 Samuel 27:7 says David stayed with the Philistines for 1 year and four months, which is very shortly before Saul's death (1 Samuel 28-29). Three days later (2 Samuel 1 and 2), a 2 year long civil war starts between David and one of Saul's sons, but Scripture counts David's rule from that moment; ruling from Hebron 7½ years before taking Jerusalem (2 Samuel 2:1-11). The precise date for Samuel's death then is 1013 BCE, 2 years before David begins ruling at Hebron. Samuel's 96 year long life also explains why he is called old some years before his 38 years of service to Saul commences (1 Samuel 8:1).

Our 450 year clock then ends with Samuel being made a judge 7 months after Eli's death (1081 BCE), so that same clock must begin in about 1531 BCE, give or take 2-3 years on either side.

The clue then for what Paul means is in Acts 13:17; *"Elohim chose our forefathers and magnified them while they were sojourners in Egypt."* What happened after Joseph and Jacob's time that "magnified" Israel? Moshe was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus in 1447 BCE (Exodus 7:7) which would put his birth in about 1527 BCE, 80 years earlier and exactly at the right time for Israel to be "magnified"! As a result, the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness must be included within the 450 years that Paul is referring to in Acts 13:20.

Eighteen New Testament Misconceptions

Most people are blissfully unaware that there are 18 widely held modern Christian theologies that are the exact opposite of what was taught in the First Century by Y'shua, Paul and the original Netzarim Shlichim (Apostles). This is, in part, due to the fact that the Hebrew and Aramaic languages contain many words that have several meanings. For example the word *ruach* (רוח): Does it mean "spirit", "wind" or "breath"? Or, in Aramaic does *miltha* (מלתא), mean "word", "instance", "emanation", "substance", "occurrence" or "manifestation"? Perhaps when Yochanan wrote *"In the beginning was the miltha,"* he meant all of these definitions, and yet the Greek redactor could only pick one phrase that reflected one meaning, out of a possible six! Understanding the language of Y'shua and his disciples is certainly not difficult, but the problem remains that original Hebraic teachings have not been very accessible to the majority of Christians. Any doctrine that makes void the teachings of Y'shua and Torah has very broad implications, and so we'll begin with the greatest opposite of all.

#1: Fulfilling the Torah

> *"Do not think I have come to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I tell you I have not come to* ***destroy*** (ashrea--אשרא) *but to* ***fulfill*** (amala--אמלא)*."* Matthew 5:17

It is an absolute impossibility for "destroying" and "fulfilling" Torah to be or to mean the same thing! Here the text is putting them in opposition to one another; so if it isn't A but it is B, then B cannot be the same thing as A. As basic as this is, mainstream Christianity has levied a false assertion that "fulfilling the Torah" means that it is no longer necessary, i.e. destroyed!

The Aramaic word used for "fulfill" is *amala*, derived from the root *mela*, which means "to complete". This completion is not one that results in destruction, but better understanding of the promises made. Let's examine a few verses:

> *"So that you might know the* ***d'amla*** (complete--דאמלא) *truth about the things you have been taught"* (Luke 1:4).
>
> *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten from the Father* ***d'amla*** (complete--דאמלא) *in grace and truth"* (Yochanan 1:14).
>
> *"The words which You have given me I have given them, and they received them, and understood* ***d'amla*** (completely--דאמלא) *that I came forth from You, and they believed that You did send me*" (Yochanan 17:8).

This last verse clarifies the point in the strongest possible terms; this is where Y'shua clearly teaches that "fulfilling / completing" commands does not cast those commands aside; but rather, shows that they have been interpreted properly, as these citations from the Tanakh also prove:

> *"So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being priest to YHWH, in order to* ***fulfill*** (male--מלא) *the word of YHWH, which He had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh"* (1 Kings 2:27).
>
> *"To* ***fulfill*** (male--מלא) *the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept Sabbath until seventy years were complete*" (2 Chronicles 36:21).
>
> *"May he grant you your hearts desire and* ***fulfill*** (***male***--מלא) *all your counsel!"* (Psalm 20:4)

Here is the *exact* word that Y'shua used, but for a slight dialectical difference in accent and, as the reader can see, nowhere in any context does the command pass away! Instead, the opposite is shown, since it is the power and validity of the command which forces its hearer to first interpret it properly and then carry it out exactly as intended. There are also half a dozen other words in

Hebrew that carry the same meaning, and in all of their cases the *"fulfillment"* of a command coincides with its proper interpretation (Leviticus 22:21, Numbers 15:8, Ezra 1:1, Nehemiah 5:13, Psalm 76:11, 145:19).

"Fulfill" also means to have proper understanding of a scriptural passage, such as recognizing a precise fulfillment of prophecy. Therefore, when Y'shua says, *"This word is fulfilled in your hearing,"* he means that he is the goal or object of that prophecy and has now arrived on the scene to do his mission as specified according to prophecy. Now, if the "fulfillment" has not happened yet, as is the case when Y'shua says, *"All that is written in the Torah and Prophets must be fulfilled,"* then it means, quite obviously "kept", "vouchsafed" or "adhered to" – the exact opposite of passing away! That is also why he says, *"He who keeps* (fulfills) *my words shall not taste death"!*

#2: Destroying the Torah

While keeping or vindicating Torah is the true meaning of "fulfill", let's also look at the word "destroy." "Destroying the Torah" is an equivalent to the English phrase to "break the law," meaning that the broken law is not then made null and void by the criminal who went against it. For example if you are caught speeding it does not mean there are no longer any speed limits on that roadway. Technically, however, the Aramaic word Y'shua uses does not mean "destroy" at all, but rather "to loosen", "release" or "unravel". Here are a few verses that use this exact root:

> *"When therefore they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to* ***let loose*** (*d'ashrea--*דאשרא)? *Barabbas or Y'shua, who is called the Mashiyach*?" (Matthew 27:17)
>
> *"Pilate therefore said to him (Y'shua), "You do not speak to me? Do you not know that I have the authority to* ***let you loose*** (*d'ashrikh--*דאשריך) *and I have the authority to crucify you?"* (Yochanan 19:10)
>
> *"And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been* ***let loose*** (*d'neshtarea--*דנשתרא) *if he had not appealed to Caesar"* (Acts 26:32).

Obviously none of these verses contains the idea of destruction! However, in Aramaic thought, destruction is a kind of unmaking, literally creation in reverse. Another way to think of this idea, then, would be to consider that we sometimes talk of divorce as "dissolving the bonds of marriage." In the same way, YHWH's covenant can also be undone when his people disobey Him. Once this unraveling is completed, though, it is fair to look at what has been unraveled as having been effectively destroyed, even as we realize the other, better meaning for our Western minds would be "release". Furthermore, on the Tanakh side, there are several words that have this same meaning:

> *"The fountains of the great deep* ***were released*** *and the floodgates of the sky* ***were opened*** (pathach--פתח). *Shake yourself from the dust, rise up, O captive Jerusalem;* ***Loose*** (pathach--פתח) *yourself from the chains around your neck, O captive daughter of Zion"* (Isaiah 52:2).

What makes *pathach* a particularly important word is its usage in Hebrew grammar. *Ptaha* (same word) is the term used to give an open "A" sound via a special vowel marking. The Hebrew speaker is expected to open his mouth very wide as he releases the sound. Y'shua also used the Aramaic version of this word (*ephatha*) in Mark 7:34, as he commands that a man be released from his blindness. Either way, whether we are dealing with a sound or an infirmity. This word clearly designates the strong sensation of deep release. Therefore, to restore the original meaning of this verse in Matthew it best reads:

> *"Do not think I have come to unravel the Torah or the Prophets. I tell you I have not come to* ***unravel*** *but to* ***give proper interpretation of them"*** (Matthew 5:17).

#3: Under the Law

Before previewing the usage of this word in the Renewed Covenant, let us look at how it is used in the Tanakh:

> *"They should collect all the food of the good years that are coming and store up the grain* ***under*** (tachath--תחת) *the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food"* (Genesis 41:35).

> *"Then the priest shall put the woman under oath and shall say to her, "If no man had laid with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, being* ***under*** (*tachath--*תחת) *the authority of your husband, be immune to this water of bitterness that carries a curse"* (Numbers 5:19).

As we see here, to be "under" something means to derive authority from it, and this is true not just of the word highlighted in Hebrew here, but several other synonyms translated into English as "under" as well. Therefore, if we are "under the Torah," that would mean that we derive authority from the Torah, a doctrine that is *never* taught in Tanakh:

> *"YHWH appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. Stay in this land for awhile, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations of the earth will be blessed* ***because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My requirements, My commands, My decrees and My Torah****." So Isaac stayed in Gerar"* (Genesis 26:1-6).

> *"In any dispute, the priests are to serve as judges and decide it according to My ordinances.* ***They are to keep My laws and My decrees for all My appointed feasts, and they are to keep My Sabbaths holy****…declares the Sovereign YHWH"* (Ezekiel 44:24,27).

There are dozens of other examples of this same idea. All the requirements in Torah are not "Jewish" or even just "for Israel". Rather, they are YHWH's requirements, and it is from YHWH, and not the Torah, from which justification for doing the right things comes from. In other words, if you just happen to do a ritual commanded in Torah because it seems trendy, then by Torah standards you are absolutely not justified! This idea is true even with a foundational requirement, like that of circumcision:

> *"The days are coming," declares YHWH, "when I will punish all who are circumcised only in the flesh. Egypt, Judah, Ammon, Moab and all who live in the desert in distant places. For all these nations are really uncircumcised, and even the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart"* (Jeremiah 9:25-26).

Clearly circumcision never justified those people who are being referenced. Jeremiah's insight is identical to that of Acts 15! But let's hear more on this from other prophets:

> *"Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to Me. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts My soul hates.*[45] *They have become a burden to Me. I am weary of bearing them. When you spread your hands in prayer, I will hide My face from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. You hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of My sight! Stop doing wrong and learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow"* (Isaiah 1:15-17).

45 Romans 3:19, or "Now we know that whatever the Torah says, it speaks to those who are under the Torah, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to Elohim", uses a synonym to express the same idea. The construction there is l'aylin d'b'namusa, which parses out literally as: l (to) aylin (those) d (who are) b (under) namusa (Torah). The key to the verse is the B proclitic, which usually means "in", but is better translated as "under". The true etymology though is that the B proclitic lexically is "by, through, in, inside or into", and therefore, if you have gone into something - like a tunnel for example - you are also under it.

> *"For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the acknowledgment of Elohim rather than burnt offerings"* (Hosea 6:6).
>
> *"With what shall I come before YHWH and bow down before the exalted Elohim? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will YHWH be pleased with thousands of rams or ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does YHWH require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your Elohim"* (Micah 6:6-8).

This is also why Abraham comes up as an example in the Renewed Covenant over and over again. The message, in every case, is the same. Abraham performed a ritual because he believed the Word of Elohim, who instructed him to do it in the first place! Therefore, justification for Abraham, and for the rest of us, comes in two parts:

> 1) Hearing and understanding the word of YHWH
> 2) Taking what YHWH has said and manifesting that understanding by following the instructions

Neither faith nor works alone is sufficient. Works without faith shows a lack of understanding the Torah, and faith without works, as Ya'akov Ha Tzadik says, is dead. Put simply, "under the Torah" is not an idea that was coined during Mashiyach's time, but is a false teaching that has been rampant from the beginning of time. For example, in Genesis 4, Cain and Abel give offerings to YHWH. It has been a common misconception that Cain's offering was not accepted because it was from grain, whereas Abel gave a blood/meat sacrifice. The fact is, both grain and blood/meat offerings were deemed acceptable under the right circumstances, (Exodus 29:41, Leviticus 2:1, 5:13, 6:14-15, many others).

Instead, YHWH rebukes Cain this way:

> *"Then YHWH said to Cain, "Why are you downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door. It desires to have you, but you must master it"* (Genesis 4:6-7).

In a sense, Cain thought he was "under the Torah," that by simply doing the ritual motions he was justified. However, since Elohim knew his heart, He did not accept the Cain's offering. Similarly, the Pharisees had also fallen into this trap, which is why Yochanan the Immerser says:

> *"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones Elohim can raise up children of Abraham"* (Matthew 3:7-9).

Y'shua's frequent rebukes on this same idea hardly need to be laid out exhaustively here. It is enough to simply say that Yochanan did not want the Pharisees to boast in their rituals or lineage, but actually to turn their hearts towards YHWH and admit their sins. With these thoughts in mind, let's look at some more familiar verses on this idea:

> *"For all who have sinned without the Torah will also perish without the Torah, and all who have sinned* ***under*** (tachyt--תחית) *the Torah, will be judged by the Torah"* (Romans 2:12).[46]
>
> *"To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are* ***under*** (tachyt--תחית) *the Torah, as under the Torah though not being myself* ***under*** (tachyt--תחית) *the Torah, so that I might win those who are* ***under*** (tachyt--תחית) *the Torah, to those who are without Torah, as without Torah, though not being without the Torah of*

46 It is a common misconception that Galatians 3:23 is an "under the Torah" verse. The fact is, it is not, for while the Greek does read that way, the Aramaic says, *"Torah was guarding us"*. Lamsa translates this as "guided", probably to align with the Greek but also because the guide/teacher synonym *taraa* as used in the next few lines.

Elohim, but in the instruction of Mashiyach, so that I might win those who are without the Torah" (1 Corinthians 9:20-21).

If the word תחית looks familiar, it should. It is simply the Aramaic cognate of the word that was referenced at the beginning of this section. Therefore, "under the Torah" really means "to derive justification from the authority of Torah and not from YHWH." For the sake of completeness however, let us examine more places where "under the Torah" appears:

> *"But when the fullness of time was come, Elohim sent forth His Son who, born of a woman, became* ***subject*** (tachyt--תחית) *to the Torah"* (Galatians 4:4).

Here is how George Lamsa translates this verse. Instead of merely rendering תחית "under" again, Lamsa has correctly surmised that תחית better reads as "being subject to the Torah," which is an efficient way of bringing on the Tanakh understanding that refers to the power of various authorities. In this case the woman is subject to the Torah pronouncement that all of us are under sin. It is not the Torah itself that is sin (Romans 7:12) but, rather, that the Torah tells us what sin is (Romans 7:7-9). Let's continue this thought further:

> *"To redeem those who were* ***under*** (tachyt--תחית) *the Torah, that we might receive the adoption of sons"* (Galatians 4:5).

In this context, the message Rav Shaul gives here is that the proper understanding of Torah by Gentiles grafts them into Israel. This is why he says elsewhere:

> *"Do not be arrogant, but be afraid, for if Elohim did not spare the natural branches (Jews who did not follow Torah), He will not spare you either"* (Romans 11:21).
>
> *"Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that is done in the body by the hands of men)--remember that at that time you were separate from Mashiyach****, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise****, without hope and without Elohim in the world. But now in Mashiyach Y'shua, you who were far away have been brought near through the blood of Mashiyach"* (Ephesians 2:11-13).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have this verse proving once again that the Torah itself is not the problem:

> *"Tell me, you who want to be* ***under the Torah****, do you listen to the Torah?"* (Galatians 4:21)

#4: Justified by Torah

This term is largely a synonym for "under the Torah" in that it looks to Torah ritual alone for forgiveness of sins. Further, the same rules just discussed for "under the Torah" apply here also. The reason for the slight repetition, however, is two-fold. First, "justified by the Law" is a common buzzword in conventional Christianity, and therefore should be dealt with separately lest anyone think that idea is correct under that title. And secondly, because it gives another chance to dispel the myth that the Torah preaches salvation through works:

> *"In YHWH all the generations of Israel will be justified, and in Him they will boast"* (Isaiah 45:25).

This could not be clearer. It is obedience to Elohim's laws, precisely coming from the knowledge that they came from Him, which causes justification. Here is yet another witness to this same idea:

> *"'Cursed is anyone who does not affirm the terms of this Torah by obeying them.' And all the people will reply, 'Amen'"* (Deuteronomy 27:26).

Let's look at a parallel passage in Galatians on this same idea with the next pair of terms.

#5: Curse of the Torah

First, here are some Scriptures that are rarely taught in a church setting:

> *"And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will* ***curse*** (kelawlaw--קללה). *And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed"* (Genesis 12:3).

> *"You will receive a* ***curse*** (kelawlaw--קללה) *if you reject the commands of YHWH your Elohim and turn from his way by worshiping foreign gods"* (Deuteronomy 11:28).

> *"Then afterward he read all the words of the Torah, the blessing and the* ***curse*** (kelawlaw--קללה)*, according to all that is written in the book of the Torah*" (Joshua 8:34).

Most understand very well that Torah was not invalid during "Old Testament" times; it is crystal clear, then, that the "curse of the Torah" does not cause Torah itself to pass away! Nor is it tenable to suggest that a curse is something invented among the apostles, who were allegedly trying to divorce themselves from their own Hebraic roots. With this in mind, let us examine a familiar verse:

> *"All who rely on observing the Torah of Moshe are under a curse. For it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the Torah'"* (Galatians 3:10).

This portion of Galatians is, in fact, so critical that it is necessary to go line by line to uncover the true nature of Rav Shaul's argument. Again, if this was the first time "curse of the Torah" was being discussed, perhaps the idea that Torah was passing away might be a little more plausible - and yet Torah remained in force during the many centuries since the passages in Genesis, Deuteronomy and Joshua were written. In addition, if Rav Shaul was actually trying to undermine the authority of the Torah, it would be very foolish of him to quote almost verbatim from Torah while also teaching Torah as his authority!

> *"Clearly no one is justified before Elohim by the Torah, because the righteous will live by faith"* (Galatians 3:11).

Again, if Rav Shaul says no one is justified by the Torah, and he is quoting from the Torah, or, more specifically, Habakkuk 2:4, then he is simply repeating what was said earlier – that ritual is empty without intentionally accepting the fact that the requirement came from YHWH, and that our observance is based on YHWH's will, not what is trendy or traditional among men.

> *"The Torah is not based on faith; on the contrary, the man who does these things will live by them"* (Galatians 3:12).

The Torah then, as Rav Shaul says, is merely the instruction manual. It is acknowledging, though, the faith in Torah's divine origins that justifies us. Mashiyach redeemed us from the curse of the Torah by becoming a curse for us, for it is written:

> *"Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree"* (Galatians 3:13).

To properly understand this verse, we must understand the source of Rav Shaul's quote:

> *"If a man is guilty of a capital offense is put to death and is hung on a tree, you must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him the same day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under Elohim's curse"* (Deuteronomy 21:23).

In other words, the only way Mashiyach could "become a curse" is by being put to death in the manner of a criminal. Make no mistake about it, Mashiyach was completely innocent of all charges levied against him! He committed no capital offense; however, he died in the *manner* of a criminal:

> *"I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is turned to wax, it has melted away within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You lay me in the dust of death. Dogs have surrounded me, a band of evil men has encircled me. They have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. People stare and gloat over me. They divide their garments among them, and cast lots for my clothing"* (Psalm 22:14-18).[47]
>
> *"He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth"* (Isaiah 53:9).

Concluding this portion of Galatians:

> "*He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Mashiyach Y'shua, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit"* (Galatians 3:14).

"The promise of the Spirit" is that YHWH spoke to Abraham, and when Abraham did as he was instructed, he procured the blessing of YHWH on the entire world for his obedience. This is also the promise that Rav Shaul says was *not* nullified at Sinai, because the giving of the Torah to Moshe was simply another step in a lengthy promise which was working itself out for centuries prior to Moshe even being born. Now, the Gentiles, who previously did not know the true Elohim, were allowed to come near to Him by faith in His Son.

Therefore, all the Scriptural evidence clearly points to the idea that the "curse of the Torah" is simply that Torah shows us what sin is and sets a standard for Perfection. However, the Torah also points us to Redemption, Salvation and Deliverance and a time of reckoning when those who are dead will awake to everlasting life or everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:1-10). Enoch and Elijah are two exceptions who did not taste death; therefore, the "curse of Torah" does not automatically apply to physical death. Both of these men were righteous and observed Torah according to how YHWH intended by Faith, and because of their Faith they did not see death.

> *"Do we then nullify the Torah through faith? Not at all! Rather, we establish the Torah"* (Romans 3:31).

#6: Works of the Torah

"Works of Torah" also appears in Galatians 3:10. However, the more accurate phrase is, "those who rely (only) on observance of the Torah of Moshe." In other words, this means that *"works of the Torah"* is something that stands alone without the faith element required to sanctify the ritual, as seen in other verses:

> *"Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His sight by **works*** (abdeh-- עֲבדא) *of the Torah; rather through the Torah we become aware of sin"* (Romans 3:20).
>
> *"For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from the **works*** (abdeh-- עֲבדא) *of the Torah*" (Romans 3:28).
>
> *"We who were Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, know that a man is not justified by the **works*** (abdeh—עֲבדא) *of the Torah, because by the works of the Torah no man shall be justified"* (Galatians 2:16).

In this last verse Rav Shaul appeals to his own people and says that, ***out of their own Scriptures and traditions, they should know that ritual alone does not justify themselves!*** Furthermore, the word used here for "works" is עֲבדא and it has an interesting etymology. The word עֲבדא can also be personified, turning the meaning into "servant" or even "slave", as we see here:

> *"Paul, a **servant*** (abdeh-- עֲבדא) *of Mashiyach Y'shua, called to be an apostle and set-apart for the Gospel of Elohim"* (Romans 1:1).

47 Also see Philippians 3:5-11, where you have a vivid description of ritual for ritual's sake. But, as Rav Shaul rightly states in so many places, it is the belief behind the ritual that counts.

> *"Paul and Timothy, **servants*** (abdeh-- עֶבדא) *of Y'shua the Mashiyach"* (Philippians 1:1).
>
> *"Ya'akov, a **servant*** (abdeh-- עֶבדא) *of Elohim and of our Master, Y'shua the Mashiyach"* (Ya'akov 1:1).

Therefore, the teaching in a sense is not to be a slave of any form, but to understand that we are to follow the commandments of YHWH. With that idea established then, let us look at the remainder of the Scriptural record:

> *"You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Y'shua the Mashiyach was publicly portrayed as crucified?"* (Galatians 3:1).

Compare this statement to two others Rav Shaul makes. The first one is in Galatians 1:6-7 where he talks about these people turning to "another Gospel, which is no Gospel at all." The second is here:

> ***"For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.*** *And when the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Master Y'shua will slay by the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the works of Satan, displaying in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they have refused to love the truth and so be saved.* ***For this reason Elohim sends them a strong delusion, so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness"*** (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12).

The message is that the Galatians should have known better by what they have seen and heard, and that the heresies that have ensnared them arose very early and will continue right until the End Times. Now let us examine the next verse:

> *"This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the **works*** (abdeh--עֶבדא) *of the Torah, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish*?" (Galatians 3:2-3)

Clearly no one, neither Jew nor Gentile, ever became righteous by doing the Torah. Instead, they came to the decision to do Torah through spiritual revelation that this was YHWH's will:

> *"Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain? So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the **works*** (abdeh-- עֶבדא) *of the Torah, or by hearing with faith*?" (Galatians 3:4-5)

It is extremely important to understand that the "Spirit" is not above Scripture. Rather, the Spirit guides us to the proper interpretation of Scripture as well as proper implementation of Scripture's commands:

> *"Even so Abraham believed Elohim, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that Elohim would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "all the nations will be blessed in you." So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer"* (Galatians 3:6-9).

Here we see the climax of Rav Shaul's argument. Abraham heard the Voice of YHWH, recognized The Voice as the One true Elohim, and then, by obeying that Voice, had his belief credited as righteousness. It just does not get any clearer than this. Rav Shaul aligns with the same understanding in the Tanakh, which is that works without understanding the origin of its requirements is a dead ritual. It certainly does not mean that the Torah, which has this truth, is to be set aside!

#7: Died to the Torah

> *"Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to **die to the Torah** through the body of Mashiyach, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for Elohim. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Torah, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Torah, for we died with Mashiyach, and we are no longer captive to its power. Now we can really serve Elohim, not in the old way by obeying the letter of the Torah, but in the new way, by the Spirit"* (Romans 7:4-6).

The heart of this passage is the phrase, "For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Torah, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death." Sinful passions have always been aroused by Torah. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve came to know sin only when YHWH said *"thou shalt not eat"* and then after they sinned they tried to cover up their nakedness. In addition the "new way, by the Spirit" is really the old way, of Abraham (Romans 4:2-16), but it became new because by Y'shua's time the "conventional wisdom" of the Pharisees was anything but wise! The consistent point of Rav Shaul, though, is that Torah is the way sin is defined, and yet, just a few lines later he makes it clear that:

> *"As a result, Torah is Set Apart; and the Commandment is Set Apart, and righteous, and good"* (Romans 7:12).

Notice that the "old way" was the Pharisees tradition of obeying the "letter of the Torah," but this is most certainly not an indictment against Torah! Y'shua taught that Torah is good, but we are instructed to look at the intent, heart and spirit of Torah:

> *"Woe to you, teachers of the Torah and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices--mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the Torah--justice, mercy and faithfulness.* ***You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former"*** (Matthew 23:23).

> *"Yet a time is coming, and now has come, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. Elohim is spirit, and His worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth"* (Yochanan 4:23-24).

Now let us look at the other passage where "died to the Torah" appears:

> *"For when I tried to keep the Torah, I realized I could never earn Elohim's approval. So I **died to the Torah** so that I might live for Elohim. I have been crucified with Mashiyach"* (Galatians 2:19).

Rav Shaul realized that he had fallen into the same trap that he now accuses other religious authorities of being in. He gives more details on the method behind that trap here:

> *"For you have heard of my former way of life in Judaism…I was advancing in Judaism beyond the Jews of my own age* ***and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers***" (Galatians 1:13-14).

Notice Rav Shaul does not mention Torah here, but "the traditions of my fathers" (i.e., the fences built by men around the Torah). Here the ritual became so important that it gave birth to regulations that became erroneously identified as sanctification. Instead, the true justification is in the next line:

> *"But when Elohim, who set me apart from birth and called me to His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son to me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man"* (Galatians 1:15-16).

Once again, it is always the faith behind the rituals that really counts.

#8: End of the Torah

Here is an important and very beautiful phrase that is equally apparent in both Aramaic and in Greek:

> "*Mashiyach is the **end*** (Gk. telos) *of the Torah, so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes"* (Romans 10:4 NIV).

While *telos* can mean, "end", it is very irresponsible to render it this way due to the flexibility of that term in the receiving language. In English, "end" has two meanings. The first is "termination" which is the majority usage of the word in English. However, we also have phrases such as "the *ends* do not justify the means." In this case, the lesser-used meaning is that of "goal", which applies in both Greek and English.

Rav Shaul clearly refers to the Torah itself as *"perfect, righteous and good"* (Romans 7:12), so it is very foolish to then think that he turns around and teaches the "termination" of Torah. Instead, and as Rav Shaul clearly teaches in Galatians 3, Torah is the tutor that instructs and brings people to Mashiyach. Then, when a person understands and accepts the fact that Y'shua is Mashiyach, he (Mashiyach) becomes Torah's *goal*. This is also one of the many meanings behind the cryptic remark in Yochanan 1, calling Y'shua the "Word (Torah/Miltha) made flesh." By extreme contrast, the NIV translation of Romans 10:4 is the exact opposite of what the original texts meant! NIV makes it sound like Rav Shaul is a train conductor calling out a stop--"End of the Torah! Everyone get off!"

Furthermore, in certain key Renewed Covenant passages, *telos* can *only* mean "goal":

> *"But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to Elohim, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the **goal*** (telos) *is eternal life"* (Romans 6:22).
>
> *"The **goal*** (telos) *of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith"* (1 Timothy 1:5).
>
> *"Obtaining as the **goal*** (telos) *of your faith the salvation for your souls"* (1 Peter 1:9).

In Aramaic we find these same verses have the same reading as "goal" with the word *saka*. Like *telos*, the context provides the key to realizing the intended meaning. Because Rav Shaul continually upholds Torah in every way (Romans 3:31), then "goal" is also very consistent with the rest of his teaching.

#9: My Word/Commands/Commandments

Many Christian theologians posture that Y'shua brought "his own commandments", and that these are somehow new and improved over the ones given in Torah. The same principles apply here as with the synonyms we discussed earlier, namely "commands" and "words". However, since the Aramaic foundation for these principles has been established earlier, we need not visit linguistics again here, so let's examine a few verses that are often twisted right out of context:

> *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away"* (Matthew 24:35).
>
> *"For all who are ashamed of me and my words in this sinful and adulterous generation, the Son of man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with his Set Apart Messengers"* (Mark 8:38).
>
> *"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you"* (Yochanan 15:7).
>
> *"This is my commandment: That you love one another, as I have loved you"* (Yochanan 15:12).

The truth is that Y'shua's words, commandments and commands, were all according to and validated by Torah:

> *"Now He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things that are written about me in the Torah of Moshe and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled"* (Luke 24:44).
>
> ***"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me**; and you are unwilling to come to me so that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men; but I know you, that you do not have the love of Elohim in yourselves. I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only Elohim? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; **the one who accuses you is Moshe, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moshe, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?**"* (Yochanan 5:39-47)

In these other passages, Y'shua makes it very clear that his teachings do not even come from himself:

> *"My teaching is not my own, but His who sent me"* (Yochanan 7:16).
>
> *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father abiding in me does His works"* (Yochanan 12:49).
>
> *"For I did not speak on my own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent me has given me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak."* (Yochanan 14:10).
>
> *"He who does not love me does not keep my words, and the word that you hear is not mine, but the Father's, who sent me."* (Yochanan 14:24).

#10: A New Commandment

A variant of the above idea is the "new commandment" as a kind of sudden "New Testament" enlightenment that was not possible in Torah. Once again though, Scripture begs to differ. As with the previous topic, let's take a look the passage that gets twisted:

> *"A **new commandment** I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another"* (Yochanan 13:34).

Now let us stop and think for a moment. Is anyone really so foolish as to believe that Torah, in all its writings, has no commandments for people to love one another? This was a brand new idea just 2,000 years ago? Really? Let's look at just a few Scriptures:

> *"You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am YHWH"* (Leviticus 19:18).
>
> *"The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the YHWH your Elohim"* (Leviticus 19:34).
>
> *"So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt"* (Deuteronomy 10:18).

Obviously this is not a "new commandment" in the sense of it never having been given before. Rather, it is clear that this *"new commandment"* means this is the first time that Y'shua is giving this particular teaching to his apostles! Let's investigate more places where this "radical new idea" occurs:

> *"Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love,*

> *that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it"* (2 Yochanan 1:5-6).

What else can "His commands from the beginning" be other than Torah? Finally, the apostle Yochanan makes an even clearer statement on how new commandments are really about as ancient as it gets:

> *"Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word that you have heard. On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining"* (1 Yochanan 2:7-8).

What we are seeing here is that these commandments have been with us from the beginning, but their highest and truest understanding has come through Mashiyach, the light of the world:

> *"In him (Y'shua) was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it…For the Torah was given through Moshe, and grace and truth came through Y'shua the Mashiyach"* (Yochanan 1:5, 17).
>
> *"This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that Elohim is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all"* (1 Yochanan 1:5).
>
> *"For Elohim, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of Elohim in the face of Mashiyach*" (2 Corinthians 4:6).
>
> *"To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Mashiyach, and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in Elohim who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of Elohim might now be made known through the assembly to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Mashiyach Y'shua our Master, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory"* (Ephesians 3:8-14).

#11: Commandments Nailed to the Torture Stake

> *"And in his flesh (the) enmity and regulations of commands (contained) in his commandments are abolished (so) that in himself (an occurrence of the divine nature, or qnoma), he might make the two into one, establishing peace. And has reconciled both with Elohim in one body and has slain the enmity by his stake (of execution)"* (Ephesians 2:15-16).

The key word, *namusa*, can sometimes mean "Torah" and other times "custom" or "regulation". In Ephesians 2:15 though, it cannot mean "Torah" because a few lines earlier, in 2:11, Rav Shaul talks about the Gentiles being excluded from the "commonwealth of Israel" as a bad thing, and what else separates Israel from the nations other than Torah observance?

Instead, the better reading of *namusa* here and in several other key passages is "man made rules" or "regulations of the Pharisees." The Greek backs this usage up beautifully in Ephesians 2:15 by recording the word *dogma* for "ordinances", which can also only mean man-made doctrines. The Aramaic carries the meaning to an even clearer level by conjugating the phrase as *namusa d'poqda b'poqadonhi*, or "regulations of commands (dogma, rules of the Pharisees) contained in his commands (Y'shua's true teaching) is abolished, leaving only the truth for the faithful to follow. Obviously no one else but Y'shua could be the "he" behind those commands, since only Y'shua can forgive sin!

Let us go even deeper into this critical portion of Scripture by looking at the previous line:

> *"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the* ***syaga*** (סיגא)*, the dividing wall"* (Ephesians 2:14).

The highlighted word s***yaga*** means "fence". Does this sound familiar?

> *"Moshe received the Torah at Sinai and handed it on to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, and elders to the prophets. And the prophets handed it down to the men of the great assembly. They said three things: Be prudent in judgment. Raise up many disciples. Make a* ***fence*** (syag) *for the Torah*." (Mishnah, Pirkei Avot, 1:1)

The Mishnah was written by the Pharisees! The "fences" are nothing but man made regulations that restrict access to the Torah! Look what Y'shua taught about this very thing:

> *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow others who are entering to go in"* (Matthew 23:13).

Y'shua even goes so far as to say that he is the *Way* to avoid fences:

> *"Truly I say to you he who does not enter by the* ***tarea*** (תרעא) *into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the* ***tarea*** (תרעא) *is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his sheep by name and leads them out…Truly I say to you, I am the* ***tarea*** (תרעא) *of the sheep"* (Yochanan 10:1-4, 7).

The word *tarea* can mean "door" but more specifically, a "sheep gate." So while the Pharisees and later rabbis are busy making fences around Torah to get control over people, Y'shua is the shepherd who swings the gate open, letting everyone in to enjoy! Here is a similar passage that also gets twisted out of context:

> *"Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the stake"* (Colossians 2:14).

At the risk of being overly repetitive, the same man who wrote that the Torah is Set Apart just and good cannot be referring to the Torah as the "certificate of debt nailed to the cross." More fundamentally however, we have this:

We have already seen two Aramaic words (aurayta; namusa) and one Greek word (nomos) that have been the cognates used in the Renewed Covenant for the word "Torah" as mentioned in Tanakh. Even if you cannot read Aramaic or Greek it is not so difficult to consult a concordance either online or in any reference library. None of the words that mean "Torah" ever appear in either Greek or Aramaic in Colossians 2:14! So what, then, is "the certificate of debt"?

In Aramaic the word *khawbayn*, means both "debt" and "sin". In addition, Y'shua used the same word in the Sermon on the Mount when he says, "Forgive our debts/offenses, as we forgive those who are in debt to us/have offended us." Note that half the Greek texts read "debt" and the other half read "offense" because each group chose one of this word's two meanings. However, in Aramaic thought, to be in sin is literally to be in debt! Also note that *khawbayn* is in the plural state, meaning "the certificate of our debts," as in humanity collectively. That is why Y'shua says elsewhere:

> *"Y'shua said to them, 'If you were blind you would have no sin, but since you say 'we see', your* ***sin/debt*** *remains'"* (Yochanan 9:41).

Clearly, the certificate of our debts is simply a record of all the transgressions that we have generated throughout our lives. Torah tells us what those sins are, but what Y'shua did was take the *transcript of our sins* and nail it to the torture stake symbolically! However, the list of sins

is only covered if the sinner is repentant and turns from sin, otherwise they stay on the books as a witness against them.

#12: Grace and Torah

Another very common misconception is that "grace" only came with Mashiyach's advent. Prior to Mashiyach, many Christians posture, Jews were under the "age of law", which has become obsolete by yielding to the "age of grace". The fact is being either unilaterally ***"under grace"***, or ***"under the law"***, is a doctrine that has never been true! However, the "under grace" theology usually employs this verse:

> *"For the Torah was given through Moshe, grace and truth came through Y'shua the Mashiyach"* (Yochanan 1:17).

Many claim that "grace" was only made manifest through the birth of Mashiyach. The big problem with this idea is that Yochanan himself bears strong witness against it!

> *In the beginning there was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim. He was with Elohim in the beginning…And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth"* (Yochanan 1:1-2, 14).

Y'shua's origins are very clearly before Moshe existed. In fact, as the Word, his origins go back to a time before all humanity existed (Micah 5:1-2). Furthermore, promises relating to Mashiyach go all the way back to Genesis, since 49:10 tells us the scepter will not depart from Y'shua's tribe of Judah. The fact is, the moment Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, a contingency in the plan of Elohim was created that culminated with Y'shua's sacrifice on the torture stake. More fundamentally, is the matter of linguistics. Put simply, Aramaic writings very easy correlate the ancient values of "grace" or "mercy" that is not understood in the vehicular language of Greek:

> *"Anyone who rejected the Torah of Moshe died without* ***mercy*** (rakhem--רחם) *on the testimony of two or three witnesses*" (Hebrews 10:28).

> *"Speak to those who are going to be judged by the Torah that gives freedom, because judgment without* ***mercy*** (rakhem--רחם) *will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful.* ***Mercy*** (rakhem--רחם) *triumphs over judgment"* (Ya'akov 2:12-13).

As we can easily see here, "grace" could well be the valid reading in both these verses, the very same word is used in Tanakh:

> *"And may Elohim Almighty grant you* ***grace*** (rakhem--רחם) *in the sight of the man, that he may release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved"* (Genesis 43:14).

> *"And nothing from that which is put under the ban shall cling to your hand, in order that YHWH may turn from His burning anger and show* ***mercy*** (rakhem--רחם) *to you, and have* ***compassion*** (*rakhem*--רחם) *on you and make you increase, just as He has sworn to your fathers"* (Deuteronomy 13:17).

If these pairs of quotes are not sufficient to make the point then there are nearly 40 additional passages with *rakhem* as "mercy", "grace" or "compassion" to indicate this fact. There are also many synonyms to *rakhem* that have at least as many references that could be brought to the reader's attention. Additionally, in the Renewed Covenant writings, *rakhem* is the overwhelming word of choice for "grace" appearing nearly two hundred times, and interestingly enough, the same word also means "love". So, since YHWH has always loved us, we have also always had access to His grace if we admit our failings and seek Him with all our hearts.

#13: Praying in the Name of Y'shua

One of the foundational concepts within Christianity is that prayer is made in "the name of Jesus",[48] and there are many verses that appear to support this but *not all* verses as we will soon discover. Nevertheless, here are some verses that appear to uphold this from the NIV:

> *"Peter replied, 'Each of you must turn from your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the* ***name of Jesus Christ*** *for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"* (Acts 2:38 NIV)

> *"But Peter said, 'I don't have any money for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the* ***name of Jesus Christ*** *of Nazareth, get up and walk!'"* (Acts 3:6 NIV)

Also see Acts 3:16; 4:10; 4:30; 5:40-41; 9:27; 10:48; 16:18; 19:5; 19:13; 19:17; Romans 15:30; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 5:4; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 2:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 1:12; 3:12; Hebrews 13:15; 1 John 3:23 that also appear to bolster this idea. However, we must correctly understand the difference between names and titles while considering that there is One Name - imbued with power and linked directly to the One Elohim – and then there are many titles, even of the human variety that are comparatively powerless on their own. The ironic point is, Name and names look and sound the same. The difference is not only within the intentions we display when speaking them, but the distinguishing office or power behind the name.

A very important Torah concept is that of *the power of the promise*. Put simply, Elohim gives or changes someone's name, and the new meaning that is given to it points to a promise that He will fulfill. The best example of this is the patriarch Abraham:

> *"Abram threw himself on his face and Elohim spoke to him further, "As for Me, this is My covenant with you: You shall be the father of a multitude of nations, and you shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham"* (Genesis 17:3-6).

Abram is Hebrew for "exalted father". However, *Abraham* translates to "father of many nations," which is exactly what Elohim promises. A short time later, after Abraham almost sacrifices his son Isaac, he is told:

> *"All nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants"* (Genesis 22:18).

Consider that the world shall ***bless itself through Abraham's seed*** and now witness how this principle manifests itself:

> *"Jehosophat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the House of YHWH at the front of the new court. He said, YHWH Elohim of our fathers, truly You are the Elohim in heaven and You rule over the kingdoms of the nations; none can oppose You. O our Elohim, you dispossessed the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and* ***You gave it to the descendants of Your friend Abraham forever. They settled in it and built a House for Your name.*** *They said, Should misfortune befall us--the punishing sword, pestilence or famine, we shall stand before this House and before You--for Your name is in this House--and we shall cry out to You in distress and You will listen and deliver us'"* (2 Chronicles 20:5-9).

Jehosophat addressed Elohim directly in His House and then invoked the name of Abraham to access the power of Elohim's promise to the patriarch. In Orthodox liturgy, this is called *Yitzkar*, or "Yah remembers." It is done on Judaism's holiest day, Yom Kippur, when the faithful pray that Elohim will remember their loved ones who have passed on because of the covenant with Abraham and his seed. This is very obviously not the same thing as someone invoking the name of a man as if *he* were Elohim. Rather, it is an affirmation of Elohim that says:

48 In this instance the NIV passages are left intact, without restoring the Sacred Names, so the reader will see the bias in their own Bible translations.

1) I heard Your words: 2) I understood Your promise: 3) I understood how and by whom You will carry that promise out: 4) I am grateful that You have done this for us, Your people Israel: 5) And now I pray *in Your Name,* and access the power of that promise by invoking the Name that You *gave* to the recipient of that promise.

This is a *very* Jewish concept to *pray* only in the name of YHWH, but *ask* in the name of the receiver of the promise. In Aramaic, the words *pray* and *ask* are not as nearly interchangeable as they appear to be in English. These are two very distinct words derived from completely different roots. As such, it is very easy to tell the difference between them. That clear delineation is also why, when you go through the Aramaic Renewed Covenant, you will always see Mashiyach or Paul addressing their prayers to MarYah, which literally means Master YHWH. In fact, the Aramaic Tanakh has MarYah in place of YHWH almost 7,000 times, so there is no doubt whatsoever of its meaning.

Conversely, if anyone wanted to pray in the name of the man, they would have used the phrase "Our Master" - Maran (מרן). However, as with Abraham, they can access the power of the promise of Elohim with Maran. From here, two questions emerge: How did this happen? Is it really in harmony with Tanakh?

It is quite obvious that the post-apostolic church founders never understood that the name Y'shua is empowered by YHWH, and by that empowerment, the greatest promise of all is within it. Put simply, we have name and Name here too. The mortal, and common name, of a man is Y'shua, a form of "Joshua" in English. There may be millions of Yehoshua-Joshua-Y'shuas in the world right now and for them it is their legal name, but there is no power or divine promise embodied into the person because they have this proper name.

However, the *Name* Y'shua was Set Apart by YHWH for Y'shua to also receive his unique anointing as Mashiyach: Y'shua means "Yah is salvation" in Hebrew. Therefore, to call upon Y'shua is to call upon Yah to save you if you pray with the appropriate intent. Because of this one crucial fact, it is a major transgression to apply a pagan name toward the Almighty Elohim. Exodus 20:7 restricts us from taking the Name in "vain"--*shav*-- means "to make desolate". How is this done? By either directly transgressing against His Name, or taking the name of a pagan deity and applying it to YHWH. For example, one of the pagan gods was named Zeus and was addressed as "Kurios" and "Theos", – exactly the same words that the Greek translators applied to YHWH in the Greek "New Testament"! To use a name for Zeus and then apply it YHWH renders the Name above all Names as *shav*, literally giving His glory to another (Isaiah 42:8). If is true for the Father, then this same principle also applies for the Son! Furthermore, that is why Philippians 2:9-11 says:

> *"Wherefore, also, Elohim has highly exalted him and* ***given him a name which is more excellent than all names; that at the name of Y'shua every knee should bow, of (beings) in heaven and on earth and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Master YHWH is Y'shua Mashiyach to the glory of Elohim his Father."***

Hebrews 1:4 also teaches that the glory always goes to YHWH, but "the name that is above all names" is also YHWH; reason being, every other name for an angel has EL in it (MichaEL, UriEL, RaphaEL, etc). EL is a name ***for*** Elohim but not the name ***of*** Elohim that YHWH is. Once again, the verse points to the Hebrew and Aramaic name and identity of Mashiyach, because the Name of YAH is in the name of Y'shua.

However, as alluded to earlier, not all verses support the mainstream Christian tradition; in fact, one neglected passage can correct the standard interpretation of dozens of others. That is why the "name of Jesus" references were kept intact with the Gentile name Jesus, because now you will see for yourself how difficult it is to understand the truth of what "Y'shua" means by using the Gentile name of "Jesus". However, here is the passage that breaks the truth wide open:

"I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, ***protect them by the power of Your Name--the same name you gave me--so that they may be one as we are one"*** (John 17:11).

How about that? Even the Greek New Testament reads this way, proclaiming that the "name of Y'shua" is really that of YHWH. Therefore, every time we lift up our voices to Y'shua, we are really proclaiming praise to the one and only YHWH, literally, to the glory of the Father. Furthermore, since there is only One Name for the One Elohim, those who call on the true Name of YHWH become one with Y'shua, which then makes them one with YHWH. So, to bring it all together we can confidently:

- Pray in the name of YHWH.
- Ask for the power of YHWH's promises in the name of the method of their fulfillment, but only as a way to bring glory to YHWH. This involves, by the way, performing miracles. Take the case in Acts 4:1-12. In that passage, Jews who witnessed the miracles of Peter and Yochanan were not content to hear that they simply came from Elohim. Instead, they wanted to specifically know by what name it was done. Peter says it was by the name of Y'shua the Mashiyach of Nazareth that a lame man was healed. However, Peter is careful to make the point that YHWH Himself raised Y'shua from the dead so that this power could be accessed when he believed the same thing. So, when he adds in verse 12, "For there is no name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved," he is not saying that Y'shua the man replaces YHWH. Rather, what Peter means is that there is no other Mashiyach that Elohim has chosen except Y'shua to fulfill YHWH's promise. To say the Name then of Y'shua, is to acknowledge the power of YHWH to save us according to His Word.
- Immerse in the name of the Father (YHWH, Who promised and sent the Son), in the name of the Son (Y'shua, who fulfilled YHWH's promise) and the Set Apart Spirit (who is the "spirit of truth" that gives you the reasons behind the ritual). Reason: for only in that manner are the complete methods of fulfilling that promise recognized (Ezekiel 36:24), with all the glory again to YHWH. The Aramaic word for this carries a meaning closer to "immersion", as in using Jewish ritual mikveh baths. Also, the fact is that *Ruach haKodesh* (Set Apart Spirit) is another name for YHWH (Psalm 51:11) and the Mashiyach has the Divine Nature within him that only comes from YHWH (Isaiah 11:1-2, 1 Corinthians 12:3).
- Assemble in the Name of YAH – SHUA: "When two or more gather in my name, there I am in the midst," refers to these days when Mashiyach has physically departed from the world. He resurrected and ascended to "the right hand of the Father." This is a metaphor that means "to dwell next to the Father" (Psalm 110:1). Two or three souls gather together to bear witness to the directives given by the Spirit of Mashiyach. So, remembering that Yochanan told us about the Word made flesh that was with Elohim in the beginning (also see Yochanan 17:5), what happens after ascension is that Y'shua becomes the *Word* again. We know this because when he comes out of heaven again he is called by the name that he took on when he entered it two millennia before: *Word of Elohim* (Revelation 19:13)! Therefore, since the *Word* is with YHWH again, they are inseparable, and to gather in that Name is to gather in the Name of YHWH, while accessing the power of the promise of His Mashiyach.

#14: Israel and the Church

A doctrine known as replacement theology began in early all-Gentile Christian churches that postures the idea that all the blessings of the Bible were transferred to Christians and all the curses in the Bible fell upon Jews. While this may remain as a popular Christian belief, it is nevertheless very unscriptural:

"Sing for joy, O heavens! Rejoice, O earth! Burst into song, O mountains!
For YHWH has comforted his people and will have compassion on them in their sorrow.

> *Yet Jerusalem says, "YHWH has deserted us; YHWH has forgotten us." Never! Can a mother forget her nursing child? Can she feel no love for a child she has borne? But even if that were possible, I would not forget you! See, I have written your name on my hand. Ever before me is a picture of Jerusalem's walls in ruins. Soon your descendants will come back, and all who are trying to destroy you will go away"* (Isaiah 49:13-17).
>
> *"What then is the superiority of the Jew? Or what is the advantage of circumcision? Much in every way. And first, because to them were entrusted the words of Elohim. For if some of them have not believed, have they, by their not believing, made the faith of Elohim inefficient? Far be it: for Elohim is truthful, and every man false: as it is written: That you might be upright, in your declarations; and be found pure when they judge you"* (Romans 3:1-4).

Obviously, both of these passages refer to Jews and not Gentile Christians, since Christians are assumed to be Rav Shaul's audience in Romans. Also please read Romans 11:1, 11-17 and verses 25 through 29.

Rav Shaul clearly attacks hypocrites (who happen to be Jewish), rather than all Jews which would include himself. It is also very clear that Jewish sinners are not the only people Rav Shaul rebukes in his writings. Please see 1 Corinthians 5:1-13.

So if all Israel is saved, where is the "Church" in all this? You will find the answer in Ephesians 2:11-14. But, the reality is, there never was such thing as the "Church" in the days of the original Apostles - only a renewed Israel that Gentiles are welcomed to join! Gentiles do not "replace" Israel but become part of Israel! Please read Jeremiah 31:31 which very clearly references the recipients of the Renewed Covenant.

#15: The "New" Covenant

The "New" Covenant is introduced within the writings of the "Old" (please see Jeremiah 31:31-34/ Hebrews 8:8). So, when Hebrews 8:13 says that the Renewed Covenant is to put aside the "Old," it is not that the Old became obsolete and terminated. Rather, it is a clear fact of Scripture that the "New" Covenant arises as a contingency out of the "Old," because Israel rejected YHWH's laws. If the "New" Covenant gains its power from what was revealed beforehand, then what came before cannot be rendered as useless. Paul explains this matter:

> *"And for this reason he became the Mediator of the renewed covenant, that he might by his death be redemption to them who had transgressed the first covenant; so that they who are called to the eternal inheritance might receive the promise"* (Hebrews 9:15).

This is, once again, also described in the "Old" Covenant and was in fact prophesied in Isaiah 53:1-12. In reality, the terms "Old" and "New" Covenant are a misnomer, of course, and very misleading. Nevertheless the Ancient Paths that lead to the Everlasting Truth about the Renewed Covenant are right within most Bibles, accessible by all "lovers of Truth."

#16: Echad as Plurality

> *"Hear O Israel, YHWH is our Elohim, YHWH is One."* Deuteronomy 6:4

This is enough evidence, right here, to convince most Jews that there is only One Elohim whose Name is YHWH. Three is *not* one regardless of how you do the math and that's the problem. Man's math and science and tradition is opposed to YHWH's! Perhaps you've heard that in Deuteronomy 6:4 "one" is *echad* (אחד), which can mean a unity. If Elohim were exclusively singular, this would read *yachid* (יחיד) which can only mean one." Yes, *Echad* (אחד) does in fact have a compound singularity in it, such as having one synagogue with a hundred people inside. However, the situation is more complicated than this. The fact is, *yachid* is a very rare word,

and in Hebrew the number one is *echad*, so it also refers to things that are exclusively singular. This does not mean, however, that Christians are entirely wrong in using *echad* as a pointer to the "Godhead." Some of the greatest Jewish rabbis, sages and mystics have been doing just that for centuries.

Nevertheless, the reality is that *echad* is pointing to the fact that Elohim is infinite. 1 Kings 8:27 relates this very clearly. Not even the uttermost reaches of the heavens can contain Him. Therefore, we must say *echad*, because while He is One, the number one cannot contain Him either. *Infinity is greater than one!*

On the other hand, Deuteronomy 6:4 agrees with the rest of Scripture which states:

> *"By the Word of YHWH the Heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth, all their host"* (Psalm 33:6).
>
> *"But a shoot will grow out of the stump of Jesse. A twig shall sprout from his stock. The Spirit of YHWH shall alight upon him: A spirit of wisdom and insight, a spirit of counsel and valor, a spirit of devotion and reverence for YHWH"* (Isaiah 11:1-2).
>
> *"Listen to Me, O Jacob, Israel, whom I have called: I am He - I am the first, and I am the last as well. My own hand founded the earth. My right hand spread out the skies"* (Isaiah 48:12).

The Spirit of YHWH sends several spirits also from YHWH to alight on a man and the Word of YHWH doing creation but wait - Isaiah says Elohim did that *alone!* Once again, Elohim is One, and Infinity includes *everything*. That is why Trinity does not work, because it reduces Elohim to the level of His aspects, or the signs of His Infinity.

In the century before the birth of Mashiyach, Judaism was an incredibly diverse and variegated phenomenon, with deep disagreements on just about every major issue. This plurality of belief is not only mentioned in detail by the first century historian Josephus (Antiquities 18.1.2.) and in the Renewed Covenant Writings with regard to Messianic expectations, (Matthew 16:13-14), but it also permeates almost every aspect of what we know about life in Israel during that period. Even so, and of course acknowledging deep differences of opinion on the identity and power of Mashiyach, Torah – just before the dawn of the Common Era – paints a far different picture of "the Godhead." Instead of three Divine persons, the infinite Elohim has spirits or aspects, and it is these aspects, imbued with His one divine nature, that manifest themselves in various ways. This is *echad* (אחד), not Trinity.

After the advent of Mashiyach, however, the Netzarim (Acts 24:12-14) revised this picture slightly. To them, the Word of YHWH (*davar* in the Hebrew of Psalm 33:6) became the Arm of YHWH, or Mashiyach, (Isaiah 53:1). It is the Arm of YHWH's job to save (Exodus 6:6). Additionally, the "spirit of counsel" mentioned in Isaiah 11:1-2, was linked to the Ruach haKodesh that David prayed about (Psalm 51:11); again the main point being, they all came from Elohim and share in the one divine nature.

#17: His Blood Be on Us and Our Children

Perhaps the most famous "anti-Semitic" line in the entire "NT" is Matthew 27:25 where "all the crowd" is said to have invoked an eternal curse upon all the Jewish people. But let's remember that Matthew himself was also called Levi and Matthew is certainly not pronouncing a curse upon himself and his own people!

In response to the obvious facts, some bigots suggest that the religious elite were the ones who set the curse, and then, by extension the curse flows over all Jews. Those who are obsessed with hating Jews will always find reason to hate; they obviously know not Y'shua or the Word of YHWH. Nevertheless, some Pharisees did in fact pronounce a curse upon themselves and their

descendants, yet very few realize how this works. Yochanan 11:48-53 makes it quite obvious that the religious elite feared for the entire destruction of Israel at the hands of the Romans, and not just their own personal loss of power. In addition, they were trying to deal with two Scriptural possibilities.

Since Y'shua was performing miracles, they knew it was very possible that he could be the Mashiyach. However, if so, Mashiyach's main purpose was to die for Israel, to be a substitutionary sacrifice for the nation (Isaiah 53:1-12). That is perhaps why Caiaphas even says Y'shua would die, either way. If Y'shua was the Mashiyach, he was supposed to do this. If he wasn't, according to their human reasoning, his death might still prevent the deaths of tens of thousands of others should Rome decide to destroy Israel, which it turns out, they in fact did, anyway. Even Y'shua predicted this, so he and Caiaphas actually agreed on this same point.

However, if they killed an innocent man in order to save the nation (better that one should die than the rest perish), Caiaphas still believed Israel would benefit. The reason is, if they made this horrible mistake, the worst that could happen is that their sin would be carried to the *fourth* generation (Exodus 20:5, 34:7; Numbers 14:18, Deuteronomy 5:9), but Israel proper would survive. If they did not act, however, then the fear was, justifiable or not, that there would be no Israel ever again, for hundreds of generations. In other words, no matter what, Y'shua had to die, which was exactly his mission in his own words, anyway. It may seem self-serving that Paul would speak so highly of his own race but he clearly taught that Jews *"…are beloved for the fathers' sake*" (Romans 11:28).

#18: Turn Thy Cheek

Y'shua taught his followers to make sacrifices for the Kingdom and to "take up their cross" and follow him. Many Christians take these ideas literally, knowing what he did on the stake; and, at certain times of the year, they parade large wooden crosses through the streets of their cities. While Y'shua predicted hardships for his followers, he also told them to rejoice when it happened – but this didn't mean he wanted them to roll over and play dead. Clearly he intended his followers to live! And while it is true that Y'shua instructed his disciples not to resist his accusers on his behalf (when he was being arrested), that does not mean he taught against self-defense.[49] Y'shua, in fact, instructed his disciples to buy swords in Luke 22:36-38 in spite of the reference in John 18:10-12 concerning his knowledge that a contingent had come against him as part of his mission. That is why Y'shua says in John 18:33-37, *"My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the religious authorities. But now my kingdom is from another place." "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Y'shua answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."*

Y'shua clearly teaches that his kingdom does not exist based on people dying even to save his life! Yet in Matthew 5:38-42 many assume that "do not resist an evil person" means to be a pacifist, when in reality, it simply means to not repay evil with evil!

As everyone knows, a person who unjustly assaults or steals from his fellow man is subject to penalty and discipline, and is required to make restitution. In ancient times it was not uncommon for some to try to "get even" with an adversary by killing them over very minor offenses, even going so far as to murder that person's family. Therefore YHWH put a limitation on vengeance (i.e. take one *eye for an eye*), the opposite of what has been taught in the Christian West which views *"eye for an eye"* as the judgments of a wrathful Elohim.

In addition, Torah rightfully interpreted and understood is the most just and fair of any legislation on this earth. Where else in the world were the rich commanded to leave the edges of their fields

49 The famous saying "those who live by the sword will die by the sword" applied to men trying to dominate the earth and fill it with evil (Luke 21:20-28), not to those defending their right to survive.

un-harvested so as to feed the poor? Nowhere! Where else were the rich required to make non-interest-bearing loans for the poor? Where else were criminals required to make restitution for their lies and stealing so that anyone who participated in criminal activity would be rehabilitated and treated as an equal? In most countries there is no legislation to rehabilitate criminals or make restitution for what they have stolen from others, yet many people think and speak very evil things against Torah.

Y'shua always taught obedience to the law! In other words, if someone is going to sue for your tunic and cloak – the only two pieces of clothing a Jew was required to wear – it must truly be for a very good reason. If the judge then grants the plaintiff's request, the guilty party must comply, even if it means he will be going home naked. Granted this is an extreme example, but it is exactly the kind of graphic imagery that Y'shua knew would have an impact on his listeners.

Finally, Y'shua advised his followers to do everything they could to prevent such lawsuits. If we give more than we are actually asked to, no one can hold us guilty. But it is the "flip side" to that concept that relates to the heart of what we are discussing. An investigation of Matthew 5:25-26 indicates that settling matters with your adversary is far better than a confrontation in court. Even if you are in the right it is always in your best interests to do whatever you can to resolve the matter outside of court.

Y'shua calls his followers to be beyond reproach so that false accusations against them will not have a negative impact. He knows that *"they will lay hands on you and persecute you"* on account of his name's sake (Luke 21:12) and he tells us: *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first"* (John 15:18-25). Nevertheless, the fact remains that Y'shua always expects the best possible efforts from his followers, and this is where *"turning the other cheek"* really comes into play.

Keefa (Peter) was rebuked for cutting off the ear of a member of the arresting party. Y'shua felt so strongly about this being wrong that he restored the stricken man's ear. Why? Because he didn't want to escalate the situation and risk the safety of his own disciples.

Y'shua wanted the assaulter to have an opportunity to re-think his actions. Oftentimes assaults are made during momentary acts of emotion. For these reasons, Y'shua says turn your left cheek, and then see if your attacker is running on their emotions. Most people, if given a moment to think about what they are doing, would probably not resort to violence. However, even if someone did, the act would indicate the intent and be so blatant that it would virtually guarantee either arrest and/or conviction of assault. Either way, this would again serve as an opportunity for both parties to make one final attempt toward reconciliation before escalating the matter further and winding up in court.

Epistle to the Hebrews

The author of the Hebrews Epistle was none other than Rav Shaul (Apostle Paul). But if there is confusion about this, don't be surprised; even Origen stated that "only G-d knows who wrote this." However, in the Middle East, there has never been any doubt about it. The earliest Aramaic manuscripts of this Epistle state:

> End of the Letter to the Hebrews; which was written from Italy of Rome;
> and was sent by the hands of Timothy.

Timothy was known to deliver manuscripts for Rav Shaul alone. Plus, the timing of Hebrews fits very well with Rav Shaul being imprisoned in Rome, from which he wrote a number of other letters according to reliable Eastern and Western sources. Timothy would not be acting as a courier for either Barnabbas or Luke; therefore, the only other possibility would be Peter, who was also imprisoned in Rome at about this same time. However, if Peter had written Hebrews,

especially since Galatians 2:8 calls him the Apostle to Jews, there would be ancient testimony to support this. But there is none.

Instead, Peter's letters, unlike his in-person ministry which we know was centered east of Jerusalem (Galatians 2:8, 1 Peter 5:12), are focused on Gentile populations (1 Peter 1:1-2; 2 Peter 3:1[50]). Furthermore, Timothy is only mentioned as being imprisoned along with Rav Shaul in Rome and released before his master to deliver his letters (Romans 16:21, Philippians 1:1[51]; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; 1 Timothy 1:2, 2 Timothy 1:16; Philemon 1:10, 13).

For these reasons and many others, the Eastern traditions supporting Pauline authorship are extremely strong. As a result, other early Aramaic sources such as the *Marganitha* have no problem, whatsoever, in proclaiming on page 124 "Fourteen epistles of the Great Apostle Paul…" specifically including Hebrews.

Introductory Doxology

Hebrews does not retain the familiar introductory doxology that Rav Shaul was known to use, but this in no way detracts from the ancient testimony and internal textual evidence that otherwise points to its authenticity. Perhaps the author was identified by his famous "distinguishing mark" or a seal on the original document (1 Corinthians 16:22;[52] 2 Thessalonians 3:17) but not on the copies of the text that came later. Perhaps the Hebrews Epistle was part of a corpus sent from Rome by Rav Shaul that the courier or couriers separated out as it made the rounds. The *Marganitha* relates how Timothy sent both letters to the Thessalonians, and it is confirmed that he was sent for this purpose by Rav Shaul in 1 Thessalonians 3:2. However, the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians were also written from the apostle's imprisonment in Rome but sent by another messenger, Tychicus. Still another Roman written Epistle, Philippians, was sent by Epaphroditus to its destination.[53] And so, with these facts in mind, it is quite conceivable how some of these messengers could have traveled together from Rome and then, when parting company, Timothy was given this text from an existing letter to courier to the Hebrews. As for the receiving assemblies, Timothy's prior courier activities would have automatically provided authenticity to manuscripts coming from him as having been written by his master Rav Shaul, and Hebrews was received on that basis by the Church of the East for that very reason.

There are also other possibilities; but these examples are meant to show that both Scripture and early traditions can point us in the right direction.

When was Hebrews Written?

Clearly Hebrews was written during Rav Shaul's lifetime since Hebrews 8:4 reads: "And if he [Y'shua] were on earth, he would not be a priest; because there are priests [there], who offer oblations agreeably to the Torah." Since this is written in the present tense, it indicates that the source of the earthly sacrifices, namely the Temple in Jerusalem, was still standing when the Epistle was written.

Hebrews & Torah

Hebrews 8:13 is often cited as being anti-Torah, however, throughout chapter seven the "instruction" (Torah) of the Levitical priests is shown according to priestly modalities consistent with Torah. By his tithe, Awraham submitted his sons to the MalkiTsedec priesthood. The priestly model in Exodus gives way to its predecessor from Genesis, which is in accordance with

50 In 2 Peter 3:1, Peter refers to his audience as getting his second letter. Therefore, the strong implication is that they are the same assemblies in Asia Minor that received his previous epistle.

51 Particularly clear in this verse, if "bondservant" for Rav Shaul and Timothy is taken literally, it can refer to their joint imprisonment, which is directly mentioned by Rav Shaul later in that chapter, in 1:14.

52 In *Ruach Qadim* I argue that an Aramaic phrase like Maran atha (our Master, come) in 1 Corinthians 16:22 may in fact be a distinguishing mark going to a predominantly Greek speaking audience! My suspicion is that the phrase acted as an authenticating code word for the synagogue officials who were charged with translating it from Aramaic into Greek for their congregation.

53 Both according to ancient eastern testimony on Peshitta NT manuscripts and as recorded in the Marganitha, p. 124.

all the prophecies in the Tanakh. It is simple anti-Torah posturing to use this passage to teach that the "Law" is passing away, when in fact it is clearly referring to instructions for the Levitical priesthood!

However, it is also vital to understand that the *akeida* (binding of Isaac) points to the *MalkiTsedec* priesthood, not to the Levitical priesthood. The *akeida* is fully realized in Mashiyach ben Yoseph, the Suffering Servant who is Y'shua. Furthermore, a change in the priestly line also requires the Levitical priesthood to actualize the order of the *MalkiTsedec* priesthood as it pertains to their service unto YHWH as Cohanim.

The Golden Censer

Some theologians posture that Hebrews 9:3-4 erroneously mentions a "golden censer" in the Holy of Holies. However, Torah supports the reading in Hebrews and indicates a golden censer in the *Kadosh Kadoshim* (Set Apart of the Set Aparts). *"And he shall take a* ***machtah*** *(censer) full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before YHWH, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before YHWH, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not"* (Leviticus 16:12, 13).

The word ***machtah*** for "censer" is also translated as "incense" because the censer holds the incense. Not all the times that "incense" is mentioned necessarily refer to the censer, but all "censers" can also be referring to the incense they carry. However, the Aramaic *besma* in Hebrews 9:4, has the majority meaning of "incense" and can never be referring to the altar.

In the Peshitta Tanakh, the censer by itself can be called *pyrma*, but when the incense is in it, then it is *besma*, especially when the kohen is carrying the "incense"; then it must also be a "censer". Bamidbar (Numbers) 17:11 (Jewish) /16:46 (Christian) actually contains both words but one is understood to also include the other. Greek, too, holds up well, as *libanatos* refers to the censer, but it is derived from the same word as *frankinsence*, a key part of the *incense* recipe! Furthermore, Hebrews tends to favor *besma*, whereas Revelation 8 favors *pyrma*, but they both refer to the same thing. One could easily become confused, but a bit of extra effort reveals that what was rendered "incense" is actually another censer in the *Kadosh Kadoshim*. Some have objected that Moshe does not call that censer "golden": however, to answer that, here is a very reliable ancient Jewish testimony which does not conflict with the written Torah:

"There were also many, and those of various kinds, of sweet spices, that belonged to the tabernacle, and such as were of very great price, and were brought to the golden altar of incense;" (Josephus Antiquities 3:198)

It is important to note that "golden" need not refer to the metal, but the fact that Torah says that burning coals and incense are in the "firepan" making it glow through the apertures.

The bottom line is, if the meaning of only one key word is somehow misconstrued, then the truth of the whole passage can easily be lost. Even most Hebrew translations indicate "incense" and *besma* as "censer". Hebrews 9:4 reflects the ancient tradition that does not overturn the peshat (plain, basic, simple understanding) of Scripture. Aramaic speaks plainly: there was a censer in the *Kadosh Kadoshim* and it was golden, exactly as Hebrews says.

Hebrews 9:19

Some theologians posture that Hebrews 9:19 is inaccurate when referring to the heifer and the mixture of its blood, hyssop, water and scarlet wool because the sprinkling is not mentioned in Exodus 24, nor is the mixture stated therein. However, Leviticus 14:6 mentions *scarlet yarn*, referencing the color, not the material. Most experts assume "thread" is implied (Genesis 38:28), just like the Hebrew does not say "hand" directly when Benyamin is interpreted literally as "son of my right" but everyone knows it is "right hand." Wool is, of course, white in its natural state,

but the Torah commands it to being dyed scarlet, which is why Isaiah uses the metaphor in the first place.

More specifically, Rav Shaul probably derived the idea that the scarlet material was wool from verses like Exodus 26:31, 36 which indicate the tentway is made of A) scarlet (insert material of choice here)" **and** B) fine twisted linen." In other words, the linen is *not* dyed and material A) is clearly shown to **not** be linen. Well, what's left if not wool? Scarlet goat hair? No! The fact is, specific material is **not** mentioned in Torah unless it is required, as is also the case in Leviticus 13:47-48 and Deuteronomy 22:11.

Deuteronomy 22:11 forbids mixing material to make garments, but there are two issues here. First, that it seems to refer to common clothing, and not priestly vestments, as is shown here: Exodus 28:15 *"You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, the work of a skillful workman; like the work of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet (material) and fine twisted linen you shall make it.* If it were all linen it would say so. And second, although it is possible to weave linen and wool into **one yarn**, this is clearly not being done here, either. You have garment A) out 100 percent **wool yarn**, and garment B) out of 100 percent **fine twisted linen**. The linen certainly does not have wool in its thread, or vice versa.

Is there a contradiction in the manner of sprinkling?

Again, no. There are two separate issues. First, there is a clear telescoping of two events we know to be separated by the monthly timetable established by the Tanakh. Two events are being taught together at one time, to establish a spiritual point; the seams are quite evident. Event #1 in Hebrews 9:19-20, teaches that the blood is for atonement. Event #2 is the blood being sprinkled on the tabernacle later. This appears to suggest the blood from that day lasted 8-9 months and then was sprinkled on the tabernacle; but again, this is how events are combined to make a spiritual point. Clearly Paul knew, as did his audience, that additional blood prepared in the same manner was required in Exodus 40. Although the reading may appear as "this same blood" the meaning more closely resembles "blood derived from this same manner."

This idea becomes even clearer when we realize that Exodus 24:5 refers to burnt offerings and sacrificed bulls, whereas Exodus 40:29 refers to burnt offerings and meal offerings. We could be much more demanding and ask where the specific reference to the sacrificed bull is in Exodus 40, but that is hardly the smoking gun against Hebrews. Again, telescoping does not mean this is one flowing event; the details from both events are being used in a spiritual discussion, something sages and rabbis have done from the beginning. On the other hand, blood is still involved with the burnt offering: Leviticus 4:7 *'The priest shall also put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense which is before YHWH in the tent of meeting; and all the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the doorway of the tent of meeting."*

The second issue is that there are multiple references to the altar and the people being sprinkled with blood from the same sacrifice. Therefore, it would not be inaccurate to conclude, given the book's placement by the altar, that it also absorbed an amount of blood.

Is there a contradictory language in Hebrews 9:23?

*"For it was necessary that these, the **representations** of heavenly things, should be **purified**, with those things; but the heavenly things themselves, with a **sacrifice** superior to them."* (Hebrews 9:23). Here we find a poor translation from original Aramaic into Greek, with certain singular-plural confusions arising.

The word ***damota*** indicates a representation, not an exact reflection, of an object. Sometimes critics of Hebrews say that the comparison of the earthly Temple objects to the heavenly puts the epistle into error. However, if exact reflection/image was intended, another word, ***tzelma***, would

have been used. This word is used, for example, in Hebrews 1:3, where Y'shua is called the exact identical reflection/image of YHWH's nature.

Another Aramaic word ***daka*** (purification) refers only to earthly representations of Temple objects, not the heavenly. The items in the Heavenly Temple need no such purification.

And finally, the Aramaic word here, ***debkha*** (sacrifice), appears the same way in the singular and plural form. In this context, there is only one sacrifice superior to the earthly Temple, and that is Y'shua himself.

Much of the misinformation that has been disseminated about the Epistle to the Hebrews is relatively easy to refute. In reality, the writer of Hebrews displays an accurate and very detailed understanding of the priesthood and Temple services, which rings very true of Rav Shaul's expertise.

Father of Heavenly Lights

The title ***Father of Heavenly Lights*** as mentioned in James 1:17, depicts YHWH as residing ***from above*** but not necessarily as in "up there." The highest level of Scriptural understanding is known as the ***sod*** (secret or hidden) level. The mystics reasoned that since the greatest reaches of the heavens could not contain YHWH (1 Kings 8:27), that there must be another dimension of space that holds "the rest of Him," for lack of a better term. This other place then would be a complete spiritual dimension for infinity to reside, because infinity divided by any sum is still infinity. To the mystics then, this region is called the "highest heaven" and its sole Resident is the part of YHWH that can never be seen (John 6:46), otherwise known as ***Ein Sof*** ([He that is] without end). So what James is saying here is that all good things come from above where Ein Sof is, and then descend down to us, even as Y'shua says:

"But this is the Bread that has descended from Heaven that a man may eat from it and he will not die! I am the Living Bread who has descended from Heaven. And if a man should eat from this Bread, he will live forever. And the Bread that I give is my body which I give for the sake of the life of the world" (Yochanan 6:50-51).

Jewish mystics have taught for thousands of years that in highest heaven all shining splendors (heavenly lights) come down from Ein Sof (the Father), and because there is no shifting of shadow He cannot be seen! It is also no coincidence that all the major mystical works were rendered in Aramaic as is this Epistle. Scholars have noted for decades that the dialect of the Zohar and related works is closely related to Aramaic of the Peshitta Renewed Covenant. Continuing with the imagery presented in this brief but very powerful verse, we have the phrase ***in the exercise of His will***. In the mystical tradition, the chief heavenly light (or ***sefira***) is called ***Keter***. In terms of its dictionary definition, ***Keter*** means "crown," but idiomatically the crown of a king also contains his *will* and his *knowledge*. The mystics also teach that this first emanation from the Father of Heavenly Lights contains all the forces and vibrations of all the other sefirot combined, and these other attributes all unfold out from *Keter* forming the "tree of life."

Feasts

The Feasts of YHWH address all aspects of community, education, fellowship with YHWH and one another; they play an extremely essential role in preparing YHWH's people for the return of Mashiyach. Within these set times of YHWH the perfection of Mashiyach is exercised through giving, sharing and experiencing the Kingdom of Elohim. Each of the Feasts holds spiritual and prophetic connections to the Divine that connect our spirits in ways far beyond the intellect. Elements of the Feasts in the natural world all point to the spiritual world. The Feasts of YHWH

are signs between the Almighty YHWH and His people. YHWH created the Sun, Moon and Stars for Moedim (appointed times or feasts); they serve as YHWH's timepieces set in the heavens to allow mankind to be in tune with the Kingdom of Elohim and learn of His will for our lives.

"YHWH said to Moshe, "Tell the people of Israel, 'You are to observe my Shabbats (feasts); for ***this is a sign between me and you through all your generations****; so that you will know that I am YHWH, who sets you apart for me. Therefore you are to keep my Shabbat, because it is set apart for you. Everyone who treats it as ordinary must be put to death; for whoever does any work on it is to be cut off from his people"* (Exodus 31:12-14). YHWH set forth His Feasts for mankind to distinguish between ordinary time where mundane work is done, and Set Apart time that belongs unto YHWH. Each of YHWH's Feasts have unique Shabbats which are Set Apart for rest and separation unto YHWH which enable the spiritual man to grow from faith to faith.

Succoth versus Christmas

Every original and authentic Feast of YHWH also has an opposing counterfeit "feast" that Christianity adopted from paganism. For example Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles) is the Feast on which Y'shua was born and circumcised; this Feast has many distinguishing components for all peoples of every nation on Earth. Succoth was prophesied to be observed by YHWH's people from the time it was revealed, all the way through into the seventh millennium (see Zechariah 14:16). The counterfeit feast to Succoth is Christmas, which has its origins in "mystery" Babylon and pagan sun worship. Christmas was celebrated long before post-apostolic pagan church founders syncretized Mithras into Gentile Christianity and, although most Christians realize the impossibility of Y'shua's being born on December 25th, it is strongly defended by false theology – and, of course, is one of the most popular counterfeit pseudo Christian feasts on Earth.

Rebellious and lawless feasting is devastating the moral fabric of society; and ranking at the top among these festivals of the fallen world are Christmas and New Years day. Parties are rife with drunkenness, gluttony and debauchery, unfortunately considered by the majority of society as "normal behavior." The fruits of these anti-Mashiyach festivals are often loneliness, depression, anxiety and financial stress. In contrast, YHWH's Set Times are abundant with righteousness and goodness along with a wholeness that elevates each soul and brings equality and deep spiritual connection with YHWH and His Mashiyach. It is sad that precious few Christians have ever sought to test YHWH's Word to discover what it means to be a Kedoshim (Set Apart People) unto YHWH!

The household of Faith will never recognize Christmas in any fashion because it is anti-Mashiyach and was installed into Christianity by a pagan culture. The pagan feasts like Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, Halloween and worship on Sunday, originated with haSatan for the purpose of leading souls away from the Kingdom of Elohim. These same "feasts" and the pagan deities being commemorated were strongly opposed by YHWH through His prophets. Only a fool would think that what was once a wicked thing has become sanctified and good because of religious traditions.

The root of paganism and rebellion is to claim that man with his various "religions" has the ability to sanctify what YHWH calls evil. For instance, when the golden calf was made in the wilderness the Israelites dared to call it by the Name of YHWH, and they built an altar to the golden calf in the Name of YHWH. These rebellious acts resulted in 3,000 deaths by the sword; and afterward, YHWH also sent a plague against them. One has to wonder, if YHWH hated paganism and rebellion in Moses' time, why would He tolerate it today?

Christmas originated with the "rebirth" of the sex god, Tammuz; and therefore, it is no coincidence that a massive phallic symbol is prominently displayed at St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, donated by Caligula, one of the most sexually reprobate and wicked emperors of Rome. The Feasts of YHWH, on the other hand, do not carry over any customs of the pagans; they are completely Set Apart unto YHWH according to His Righteousness.

Renewed Covenant Feasts

There are many insights in the original Aramaic Renewed Covenant verses that provide insights into the Feasts. For example Y'shua says; *"About the day and about the hour no man knows, not even the Messengers of heaven, but the Father alone"* (Matthew 24:36). From a literal superficial reading this says that no man can know the day or the hour of Mashiyach's return, but from higher levels of PaRDeS Y'shua is, in fact, revealing a very particular day. "No man can know the day or the hour" is an idiomatic Jewish expression for observing a watch that leads up to a specific Feast day. Rav Shaul confirms this prophetic insight: *"Suddenly, as in the twinkling of an eye, at the last shofar, when it shall sound; and the dead will arise, without corruption; and we shall be changed"* (1 Cor. 15:52). The last shofar also addresses this same Feast and confirms what the ancients have known for thousands of years; however, the revelation of which year Mashiyach will return is also hidden below the surface of the text and revealed according to YHWH's servants the prophets (see Amos 3:7).

The Feasts of YHWH are exceedingly broad and would take one or more publications to thoroughly address. The objective is simply to acknowledge that Y'shua, the Shlichim (apostles) and Talmidim (disciples) observed the Feasts of YHWH according to their ancient appointed times, not counterfeits invented by Christo-Pagan post-apostolic theologians. Not only are Y'shua and his followers zealous to observe YHWH's Set Apart Feasts but, of course, they do so at the Temple in Jerusalem along with the rest of the Jewish population. The Feasts of YHWH, in short, are extremely powerful tools for helping to grow and sustain the spiritual man. Mashiyach Y'shua taught, *"He who desires to do His will, can comprehend my teaching, if it is from Elohim, or if from my own will I speak"* (Yochanan 7:17).

The key element of doing *"His will"* is to enter into *life* and experience His voice in our spirits. As we celebrate the Feasts we press into a Set Apart relationship with YHWH. His Appointed Times help guide the soul to greater consciousness of Mashiyach and his Government; they are awesome reminders of our Father's love towards us and also reveal the vital importance of our love for one another. The Feasts present deliverance, redemption, acceptance into the beloved, separation from evil, victory over the fallen world and many more things. Rav Shaul taught that the Feasts of YHWH are to be guarded by the Body of Mashiyach: *"Let no (pagan) therefore judge you about food and drink, or about the distinctions of festivals and new moons and Shabbats which were shadows of the things then future; but the body of Mashiyach"* (Colossians 2:16, 17). The fallen religious world judges those who set YHWH's feasts apart, while observing their own, man-made religious festivals. Believers must remember to keep Christianity or any "worldly" people from dictating how YHWH's Feasts are to be observed.

"The people of Israel are to keep the Shabbat, to observe Shabbat through all their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the people of Israel forever; for in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day he stopped working and rested'" (Exodus 31:16, 17). The Shabbat is a sign and seal between YHWH the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and each Believer. Those who call themselves Christians but reject the Shabbat of YHWH have adopted the traditions and feasts of post-apostolic Gentile theologians who changed times and laws according to anti-Mashiyach (see Daniel 7:25). Those who have the seal or "Mark of YHWH" (Genesis 4:15, Ezekiel 9:4, Ezekiel 9:6, John 6:27, 2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1: 13, Ephesians 4:30, 2 Timothy 2:19) are they who not only have the testimony of Mashiyach but have Torah written upon their hearts (Revelation 12:17 and 14:12). Rav Shaul himself stated: *"…I must certainly keep the approaching feast at Urishlim. But, if it is Elohim's will, I will come again to you"* (Acts 18:21). And of course we read in a couple chapters later that Rav Shaul is being called up to Jerusalem for the feast of Shavuot (Pentecost) which is one of the pilgrim Feasts (see Acts 20:16).

Torah instructs: *"Three times in a year shall all your males appear before YHWH your Elohim in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in*

the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before YHWH empty: Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of YHWH your Elohim which He has given you" (D'varim/ Deut. 16:16, 17). These three Feasts are also known as pilgrim Feasts, which all the males of Israel were commanded to attend.

Whether the Temple is standing in Jerusalem or not, the prophetic calendar continues to count the years, months and days to the return of Mashiyach. Within the Moedim (Appointed Times) everyone enters into YHWH's prophetic calendar not only on an individual level but also as an entire community of people as a Kingdom unto Mashiyach. The world events happening today, as in every other generation, are within the timetable YHWH established before the foundation of the Earth began. The Feasts of YHWH serve to help His people view time through His eyes and to understand current events, and even their own individual personal experiences, according to the scope of His Word.

Contrary to popular opinion, the Feasts of YHWH have ***not*** come to an end anymore than time itself. When the sun, moon and stars are no more then the Feasts of YHWH will also be completed. These vitally important Feasts of YHWH help equip the Body of Mashiyach for the *acharit hayamim* (latter days) but, unfortunately, they are being neglected by the vast majority of Christians who prefer man-made "feasts" that were synchronized with pagan feasts and adopted by modern commerce. It has become popular for many Christians to claim that they don't celebrate Christmas day, but rather what "Jesus did for them." Yet most continue to erect decorated Christmas trees and exchange gifts to make a "tribute" to Jesus – which is nothing more than stubborn rebellion that employs semantics to justify willful disobedience. None of the reborn pagan rituals and relativism against Y'shua will stand against the return of Mashiyach ben David.

"These are they who, in their feastings, riot while polluting themselves, feeding themselves without fear; clouds without rain, moved about by the winds; trees whose fruit has failed, and they are without fruit, twice dead, and uplifted from their root; raging waves of the sea which, by their foam, manifest their confusion; shooting stars for which is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. And of them also prophesied Enoch who was the seventh from Adam when he said: Behold, Master YHWH comes with myriads of his Set Apart believers; to execute judgment upon all and to convict all the wicked because of all the deeds they have wickedly committed; and because of all the hard speeches which they, sinners without Elohim, have uttered. These are they who murmur and complain of everything while they walk according to their lusts; and their mouth speaks shocking things; and they flatter people for the sake of gain" (Yehuda 12-16).

Both Christian and Jewish religions have fashioned "feastings" according to religious tradition, and many speak evil against Torah-based Feasts and those who celebrate them.

The eternal Feasts of YHWH are prophesied to carry on into the seventh millennium and the world to come for all who are in Mashiyach. *"And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, says YHWH."* (Isaiah 66:23). This is a specific reference to YHWH's calendar based on the Moedim (appointed times). All counterfeit festivals will be coming to an end when Mashiyach returns, and those who turn their backs on YHWH's Feasts will be cut off (Zechariah 14:18, 19).

All who follow Mashiyach, whether Jews or Gentiles, are sojourners like Awraham and Dawid, and part of the commonwealth of Israel. *"And when a sojourner shall dwell with you, and will keep the Passover to YHWH, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One Torah shall be to him that is a native Israelite, and unto the sojourner that dwells among you"* (Sh'mot/Exodus 12:48, 49). YHWH's Set Times are rehearsals within these "days of Mashiyach," yet many who are returning to YHWH's feasts are finding themselves in a "wilderness

experience" after being ostracized from churches and from their friends and family for choosing the Ancient Paths of Mashiyach. Clearly there is a small remnant of "Israelites" who would rather suffer with the infamy of Mashiyach than be flattered with the futility of religious fame.

Fellowship

"…and to the assembly in your house…" Philemon 1:2

Those who followed Y'shua in the First Century dared to be different from the popular religions; they were persecuted because they followed a "new authority" that was not accepted by the religious or secular institutions of the day. Resistance against their freedom to follow Y'shua did the reverse of what their opponents expected, but even as the Netzari Faith grew, there was no interest among Y'shua's followers to build an institution around Y'shua or the Faith itself in which they believed. Their emphasis was to enter in themselves and bring the knowledge of the Kingdom of Elohim to as many souls as possible, to deliver the lost, heal the sick and set the captives free. What made these souls different from everyone else was their spiritual fellowship with Mashiyach Y'shua. Erecting buildings was not a priority as there were plenty of buildings to meet in, and those who held Faith in Y'shua met in homes or in Beit Knessets (synagogues) and grew their Faith together in Mashiyach.

Y'shua's days saw radical diversity within religious sects which stood at odds with each other; but, regardless of which label a person chose, they were not automatically forced to break ties with their respective communities. Many Jews from a variety of sects put their faith in Y'shua but still held traditional labels. The fact of the matter is that Faith in Mashiyach was gaining popularity so rapidly that many found themselves in an identity crisis. The label on the outside said one thing but who they were becoming on the inside in Y'shua was something far more spiritually satisfying. Y'shua made such a sustained and powerful impact on the world that even after nearly two millennia, he is still by far the most famous Jew who ever lived, with followers from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. To fully encapsulate the fellowship with Mashiyach or the potential that lies within the human soul is impossible, which is likely why Yochanan wrote: *"And there are many other things that Y'shua did, which if those were written one by one, not even the world as I suppose would be sufficient for the books that would be written"* (Yochanan 21:25). And so it is with each soul who puts their Faith in Mashiyach and experiences him, and who says, *"what Y'shua did for me."* Even the world cannot understand or contain what this fellowship with YHWH and His Mashiyach truly means.

There is no record of Netzari Jews ever building a church or institutionalizing their Faith because in those days there were many more important quests afoot. Living under the harsh, greedy and evil tyranny of Rome, they had all been harmed in some way by the institutions of man and were witnessing almost daily the unfair religious hierarchies that were oppressing their friends and families. All we know is that Y'shua's disciples and the first generation Shlichim (Sent Ones) were devoted to Mashiyach and to helping others enter into the Kingdom – which at that time was certainly not accomplished from inside any church building.[54]

Mashiyach is the central pillar, the Alap-Taw (Alpha-Omega) who manifests attributes of the Spirit that can never be institutionalized by man. The first church that was built in the mid-Second Century was a building project credited to "Marcion the heretic." Marcion, who harbored a very deep-seated hatred toward Jews, was much like the "churn 'em and burn 'em evangelists" of today who seek fame and fortune to themselves. Contrast that to the first hundred years of the Good News, where Y'shua's followers went from Believer to Believer and from one community

54 Scripture speaks of various ancient Sees or centers of Netzari authority, linked to the central Beit Din in Jerusalem ran by Ya'akov haTzadik. Such assemblies included Syrian Antioch, Babylon and, according to ancient eastern tradition, Abdiaibne and Edessa. Also Babylon and other Eastern Sees were outside of Roman and later Byzantine influences, being nestled safely in the Persian Empire.

to the next spreading the Truth of the Kingdom of Elohim by word of mouth, simply because of their love for Mashiyach Y'shua. Paul frequented regions with large Jewish populations where he was often persecuted, but he always met those who wanted to connect to Mashiyach and who sought fellowship with others of the Way. Instead of building projects and the things of the world, their time and energies were daily focused on their relationship with Mashiyach and working and living together as a body (Acts 2:44-47).

The Netzari Faith is a Torah-based lifestyle according to Faith in Y'shua Mashiyach who himself was Torah Observant. Instead of setting up a religious institution, the Netzari Faith points to the relationship between the individual and YHWH according to Mashiyach. Faith isn't as much a "statement of belief" or a theology as it is about righteous conduct and lifestyles conformed to Mashiyach. Therefore, as witnessed in the Renewed Covenant writings, it was common for followers of Y'shua to retain their labels as Pharisees, Levites, scribes, priests, or president of a synagogue. There were also many "secret believers" like Yosip of Ramtha and Niqodemus (Hebrew Nakdimon) who put their trust in Y'shua while retaining their positions in their local communities and synagogues. Today, Netzari fellowships are often small, intimate and humble meetings in homes as it was in the First Century. Unlike the Western mindset, the Netzari Faith is more about entering into Mashiyach rather than attending services about Mashiyach.

Fellowship at its root level means the Spirit of Mashiyach guides the whole body of souls; each person recognizes the Spirit within them and within each other in the community. Each Shabbat and Moed is a Set Apart gathering (Miqra haKodesh) where Believers enter into an appointment with Mashiyach and with others in the Body at a time and place that YHWH appoints. *"And they came to Ephesus; and Paul entered the synagogue, and discoursed with the Jews. And they requested him to stay with them: but he could not be persuaded. For he said: I must certainly keep the approaching feast at Urishlim. But, if it is Elohim's will, I will come again to you"* (Acts 18:19-21). Every true follower of Mashiyach sets their agenda according to the *will* of Elohim. All of YHWH's appointments are scheduled according to His Will; even as the weekly Seventh Day Shabbat has been maintained by Jews and "Fearers of Elohim" since the beginning of Creation. And, of course, the annual Feast Days are given according to YHWH's calendar in Torah so that His people can be in fellowship with Him to experience prophetic Kingdom insights from generation to generation.

True fellowship in Mashiyach is progressive, dynamic and life giving; it cannot be canned by some sort of institutional tradition or religious formula. Fellowship is based in the Living Word of YHWH that nurtures individuals from faith to faith through an ever advancing relationship with Mashiyach towards perfection. If a person turns their back on YHWH's Shabbat or His Feast days, they are in effect rejecting appointments with YHWH that He established from before the foundation of the Earth, and which extend into the "new Heavens and new Earth" (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 21:1). It is this essential component of fellowship according to the Word of YHWH that guides our souls into the Kedoshim – and there are no substitutes, only counterfeits. *"And now I commend you to Elohim, and to the Word of His Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all the Qadisha (Set Apart) believers"* (Acts 20:32). *Qadisha* (Kedoshim in Hebrew) is a commonly used Renewed Covenant term denoting a unique and peculiar people whose souls rise above the mundane each Shabbat and Feast day as Torah is being written upon their hearts according to their delight in YHWH's Commandments and His Mashiyach.

Only by entering into the Word of YHWH and experiencing fellowship with Mashiyach can we distinguish the Perfection of Mashiyach from the fallen world. Torah is Spiritual; each of YHWH's instructions point outside of time and space, each component of observance is a universe outside the dimensions of this world. For example, a Beit Din operates as a group of qualified and inalienable individuals who are mighty in Scripture and full of the discernment of the Ruach haKodesh, who bring YHWH's counsel and decisions into the fellowship and stand against the

wiles of the fallen world. It is a much higher reality than simply a different structure of leadership because, within the Beit Din itself are connections to the Divine that are unique within itself. It is simply impossible to institutionalize a spiritual connection where *"two or three are gathered"* according to the perfect Will of YHWH. Attempts to institutionalize a Beit Din according to doctrines or man's credentials will always fail miserably because relationships between members of the Beit Din and their relationships to YHWH are unique and dynamic. True fellowship always maintains Truth as the present reality of being, rather than a theology about "truth."

The distinguished identity of the "body of Mashiyach" manifests every level of equality, sovereignty of individual and protection of property and liberty, including economic equalities for each individual. There is nothing on Earth outside the Faith of Mashiyach and Torah that elevates the value of ***all*** human life as does Mashiyach, but in this same respect the true and original faith is as uncommon and rare as it is understood. It is pseudo-faith to intellectualize the truth and slap a brand on it to make it acceptable to the carnal man – but, of course, this is much more convenient than admitting that our church or synagogue is far, far away from the Faith which was revealed in Mashiyach. The true Faith is both an embarrassment to most "Messianic" establishments and an enemy of their hierarchies; hence, there are many unwritten guidelines to punish those who would even publicly speak of such equality in Torah and Mashiyach.

Most Christians use a cherished "statement of Faith" to classify themselves, as in the Nicene Creed; but unfortunately, this is a static ideology ripped right out of paganism. Regardless as to how intellectually or supposedly spiritually satisfying such a "statement of Faith" is, it barely begins to address the progressive spiritual importance of becoming a Kedoshim. Rather than the statement of Faith, the true Body of Mashiyach is identified by the visible attributes of Mashiyach and an "abundant life" in Mashiyach and Torah, which is very peculiar and distinct from religion or the world's values.

To enter into the Kingdom one must leave Babylon's values of spirituality and physicality behind. It's extremely difficult for one individual to accomplish this alone, and therefore, must be addressed as a community. At the community level children develop much of their confidence and identity in Mashiyach and Torah. *"And these words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart: And you shall teach them diligently unto your children…"* (D'varim 6:6, 7; 11:19). This is a universal and eternal Torah requirement that is totally in Mashiyach; therefore, children must have spiritual sovereignty to grow up in a home and community where they experience and rehearse Torah. *"Allow the children to come to me, and do not hinder them, for of those who are like these is the Kingdom of Heaven"* (Matthew 19:14; Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16).

Children must be taught to listen to the voice of the Spirit within them, but this of course is very difficult if parents and teachers are not capable of ministering according to the Ruach haKodesh themselves. From a very young age children are capable of "hearing" the Ruach haKodesh; but fathers, mothers and their micro community must help them confirm the voice of the Ruach and train them up in the Way by demonstrating Faith through a Set Apart lifestyle. *"If the anointing which you have received from him remains in you, you need not that any one should teach you; but as that anointing is from Elohim, it teaches you all things…"* (1 John 2:27). The presence of the Ruach haKodesh is the anointing that Mashiyach sends to guide and reveal truth; *"But when the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you in all truth. For He will not speak from Himself but He will speak everything that He hears. And future things He will make known to you. And He will glorify me because He will take of my own and show it to you"* (John 16:13).

Precious few focus on their fellowship with Mashiyach; most "go to a fellowship" and listen to the ideas of others "about fellowship" with Mashiyach. Moreover, many tend to shop around for "fellowship." But as with most things in life, we only get out of something what we invest into it. *"Hear the Word of YHWH, you that tremble at His Word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, 'Let YHWH be glorified:' but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed"* (Isaiah 66:5). The Malchut Elohim has never been about

quantities of people in attendance, but about individual spiritual refinement and observance of the Word of YHWH to the *Perfection* of Mashiyach. A Miqra haKodesh (Set Apart gathering) is true fellowship when it is comprised of a collective group of souls who are in fellowship with Mashiyach and honor the work of the Ruach in one another. In this environment of the *Kedoshim* (Set Apart people) our anointing increases along with our boldness and our Faith.

Feminine Attributes

Contrary to popular Christian belief, YHWH is not a person; He is Spirit; neither male nor female. YHWH is referred to in the male gender simply because of His attributes as the perfect Father. However, the male and female attributes of YHWH (the Image of Elohim) point to Mashiyach Y'shua and are Mashiyach because he was born of a woman. Y'shua was the ultimate seed of a woman who taught that the male and female gender is temporal: *"For in the resurrection of the dead, men do not marry women, nor are women given to husbands. Rather, they are as the Messengers of Elohim in Heaven"* (Matthew 22:30). In other words, male and female genders will not exist in the *Olam Haba* (world to come); they were created for this life as we know it, but they also point to the world to come and illustrate unity and harmony within diversity.

Those who belong to Mashiyach are referred to as the "Bride of Mashiyach." Yochanan preached, *"He who has the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, he stands and listens to him, rejoices great joy because of the voice of the bridegroom. Therefore behold this my joy is full!"* (Yochanan 3:29)

Gender roles are Set Apart unto YHWH, and Torah clearly instructs that the *Image of Elohim* is both male and female (B'resheet/Gen. 1:27). Some have even interpreted Elohim (a plural term) to be referring to the plurality of male and female attributes within YHWH. In Romans 1:19-20 Rav Shaul states: *"Because a knowledge of Elohim is manifest in them; for Elohim has manifested it in them. For, from the foundations of the world, the hidden things of Elohim are seen by the mind in the things he created even his eternal power and divinity, so that they might be without excuse."* Rav Shaul goes on to explain that the natural created world reveals the hidden things of Elohim, including the fact that many fallen men and women have changed their Elohim given "natures" and descended into reprobation by engaging in homosexuality. Clearly the male and female gender itself is a *hidden thing of Elohim* and is distinguished according to covenant.

Those who belong to Mashiyach are referred to as the wife of the Lamb: *"And there came one of those seven Messengers who have the seven cups filled with the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying: Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb"* (Revelation 21:9). The Body of Mashiyach is referred to by the feminine gender to instruct us about our relationship to Mashiyach. Isaiah stated, *"For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your Elohim rejoice over you"* (Isaiah 62:5). Clearly, this points towards deep spiritual intimacy and a covenant relationship between YHWH and His people.

The balance of male and female attributes in Scripture points to a far deeper spiritual principle than simple grammatical gender recognition within the Hebrew language. Male and female attributes are revealed according to the *Netzer* (Branch or sprout) in Isaiah 11:2, which portrays a seven-branched menorah that is equally balanced with masculine and feminine attributes. Rav Shaul addressed the unity within male and female when he taught, *"…nor male nor female, but you are all one in Y'shua the Mashiyach."* (Galatians 3:28) Certainly, male and female roles are interdependent upon one another and very much protected in Torah, and therefore there is a greater unity of purpose within male and female that is beyond the natural world which reveals the nature of Elohim and the purpose of life itself.

Within ancient Jewish writings, it was understood that Isaiah 11:2, 1 Chronicles 29:11-13, and Proverbs 8:12-18 revealed the emanations or attributes of YHWH, and male and female attributes were recognized as Father and Mother. Within Tanakh we find YHWH referred to as both a Father in Isaiah 63:16 and a Mother in Isaiah 66:13. However, the ancients also recognized that there was a unifying factor between Father and Mother which took on many names, like the "Middle Pillar" or "The Son of Yah" and it was upon this line of thinking that Philo coined the word Triad which was incorporated by Tertullian into the "persons of the Trinity." The Ruach haKodesh (Set Apart Spirit), another Name for YHWH, is feminine; and therefore, long before Y'shua came to Earth as Mashiyach there was an ancient understanding of the feminine component within the Image of Elohim. This, then, is the "hidden" Nature of YHWH who is definitely not persons, and most certainly not separate Gods.

Due to the backlash of a male-dominated society and religion, many women have been provoked into following a female goddess deity as a way to recognize and honor their own feminine natures. This, however, is nothing short of entrapment. The fact is, the feminine nature or attributes by virtue of their existence within Elohim are spiritually equal components to the masculine nature. The real power of the feminine nature is within the feminine attributes of YHWH according to *Chochmah* (wisdom), *Chesed* (mercy) and *Natzach* (victory), which are to be nurtured according to Mashiyach.

It is futile to assert feminine characteristics upon the external or physical world by attempting to personify YHWH as a Goddess – because, in reality, He is neither male nor female, nor is He both. However, the more that both masculine and feminine *spiritual attributes* are elevated, the more harmony, wisdom and victory each will experience in this life and in the world to come.

Finally, there is a huge distinction between ***grammatical gender*** and ***literal gender*** that all too often is ignored in these discussions. The English language does not insist on assigning a gender to nearly every word as do most other languages. Hebrew and Aramaic, however, do assign genders to words that have nothing to do with whether the object is masculine or feminine. In Hebrew, for example, plural masculine nouns usually end in *–im* and feminine ones in *–ot*. That being the case, the Hebrew word for "fathers" is not *"avim"* but rather *"avot."* No one believes fathers are women, and yet this same kind of logic is applied to YHWH and His title of Ruach haKodesh.

In terms of the grammar, YHWH is classified technically as male with male verbs around Him. However, in Isaiah 11:1-2 we have both masculine and feminine endings for His "spirits". This is merely the naturalistic tendency of the way Semitic languages express themselves. Even the generic word for "spirit" (ruach) is technically feminine, but can be tied to masculine adjectives that do not speak to literal gender.

Similarly some "theologians" assert very questionable doctrine from whether the term "ruach ha kodesh" is in masculine (Peshitta) or feminine (Greek) forms, but the reality is, it means nothing at all. YHWH in all "His" attributes contains all genders and yet transcends them. Yochanan bar Zawdee, however, comes close to showing this mystery in the first line of his Gospel when he combines the female phrase *Miltha* (Word) with two masculine verbs, since YHWH is all this and so much more, containing attributes that are both known to us, and yet totally beyond our knowledge.

Foreordained or Predestinated

Aramaic "***qedem reshem***" simply means "foreordained" or "predetermined" in that YHWH has set up all the potential choices a human can make, along with their concordant good or ill consequences. The All-Powerful, All-Knowing YHWH has haSatan under control; like a rabid dog chained to an anchor, the Adversary is held to the boundaries YHWH has established. Does that mean, then, that YHWH creates evil? YHWH is ein sof (without end) and rebellion entered into the world He Created; rebellion and evil were placed in the Garden of Eden in the form of "fruit" on a forbidden a tree. But before we judge evil as being a product of its own creation consider this:

The term "foreordained" references the totality of human choice. Depending on the level of your belief that YHWH is ein sof, omnipotent, omnipresent and the Creator of all spiritual and material worlds, you will either see "foreordained" through His eyes or through private conceptualization. In both Greek and Aramaic, the word associated with what became known as "predestination" occurs six times, the first being in Acts 4:28. The same word appears in this precise context in 1 Corinthians 2:7. Nevertheless, the question is often asked; "If YHWH foreordained something, how can we have choice?" Another is, "If an evil event like Pharaoh hardening his heart or Yehuda betraying Mashiyach is foreordained, why is it that these souls are punished if this is part of the divine plan that leads to greater glory for YHWH?" Rav Shaul writes, *"**And he knew them previously**; and he sealed them with the likeness of the image of his Son; that He might be the first-born of many brothers. And those whom he previously sealed, them he called: and those whom he called, them he made righteous: and those whom he made righteous, them he glorified"* (Romans 8:29-30). This does not mean YHWH favored or controlled their actions or made their decisions for them; it simply means He knew about their actions past, present and future. Understood in this light, YHWH would clearly need to possess this knowledge in order to be the Eternal One.

"Blessed be Elohim, the Father of our Master Y'shua the Mashiyach who has blessed us with all blessings of the Spirit in heaven by the Mashiyach: According as He had previously chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we might be set apart and without blame before Him; and, in love, as that before our beginnings for Himself; And adopted us for sons, in Y'shua the Mashiyach as was agreeable to His will: That the glory of His grace might be glorified which He poured upon us by his Beloved One; By whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins by his blood, according to the riches of his grace Which has abounded in us, in all wisdom and all spiritual understanding. And he has made us know the mystery of his will, which he had before determined in himself to accomplish In the stewardship of the fullness of times; that all things might again be made new in the Mashiyach, things in heaven and (things) on earth. And in him we are elected, according as that before our beginnings and willed, who works all things according to the counsel of his pleasure" (Ephesians 1:3-11).

YHWH obviously knows who will find salvation through His Son, but it remains up to the individual in his or her own moment in time and personal choice to turn from sin; therefore, "predestination" relates to YHWH's infinite insight into man's individual choices. It is not logical for "foreordained" to mean YHWH makes our choices for us, or that we are robots because, if this were the case, the "saints" would never have to experience sin; there would be no need because their destiny would be universally recognized. Why does a ray of light exhibit properties of both a particle and wave? These two things are mutually exclusive definitions, just as sin and righteousness are experienced and considered by each soul. Y'shua told Nicodemus in Yochanan's third chapter, *"I have explained earthly things and you do not believe. How then shall I explain heavenly things?"*

But this insight is hardly confined to Rav Shaul's audience alone and certainly did not just come into existence during Y'shua's time with his talmidim, as close examination of the Tanakh will

indicate. *"Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am Elohim, and there is no other; I am Elohim, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do. Listen to me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are far from righteousness. I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel"* (Isaiah 46:9-13).

YHWH knows the end from the beginning; He inhabits all times. The Word of YHWH revealed to Jeremiah his first and best destiny (Jeremiah 1:1-5). And yet from our view in our present moment, we clearly have choices that, seemingly paradoxically, affect our fate: *"This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love YHWH your Elohim, listen to his voice, and hold fast to Him, for YHWH is your life..."* (Deuteronomy 30:19-20). YHWH knows the outcome, although the hairs on our head are numbered; yet we are still given a choice.

As YHWH's creation, we are presented with the opportunity to evaluate life and the conclusions we draw and choices we make are entered as evidence of who we are in Mashiyach. Y'shua said: *"Woe to the world because of offenses. It is necessary for offenses that should come, but woe to the man by whose hand the offenses come. And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and cast it away from you. For it is better to enter into life lame, or while you are maimed, than while you have two hands or two feet to fall into the fire that is everlasting. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and cast it away from you, for it is better for you that with one eye you enter into life than while you have two eyes to fall into the Gehenna of fire"* (Matthew 18:7-9). The elements of the Passion drama are unchangeable; this is the fulfillment of Tanakh prophecy we are seeing, and again: *"And the Son of Man will go just as it is written concerning him, but woe to the man by whose hand the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been better for him if he had not been born"* (Matthew 26:24).

Notice the distinction Y'shua made between the act of his betrayal and the one who perpetrated it. That's because, while our fates are sealed, each individual who is a potential traitor still has the ***personal choice***. Yehuda could have chosen to say no; he could have decided not to see the authorities and not to turn Mashiyach over to them. Eventually another would have risen to do the deed instead – but the bottom line is, that particular man or woman would also have had the same choice. Sooner or later, the inevitable was bound to happen, and YHWH knew the outcome from before the foundation of the world. The "contradiction" is at our level, not His.

Considering that man has a choice to do good, he also has the choice to turn away from it: *"But they who have once descended to immersion and have tasted the gift from heaven and have received the Ruach haKodesh and have tasted the good Word of Elohim and the power of the world to come, cannot again sin and a second time be renewed to repentance; or a second time execute him on a stake and insult the Son of Elohim. For the earth that drinks the rain which comes often upon it and produces the herb that is of use to those for whom it is cultivated, receives a blessing from Elohim. But if it should put forth thorns and briers, it would have reprobation and be not far from a curse, and its end would be a burning"* (Hebrews 6:4-8).

Clearly, a person can experience new life "in" Mashiyach, and then choose to turn away from him. There is no "once saved, always saved" scenario going on here. The Malchut Elohim is available to all who will put their trust in YHWH and His Mashiyach and do what is pleasing to Him. In the final analysis, the Love of the Father is not isolated to a select few. All whom YHWH created have the potential to enter in and be born anew; therefore, all who rebel have clearly made their choice to suffer the consequences. Being "born from the beginning" (born again) or "born anew" carries with it the imperative of personal choice.

Mashiyach provides universal and equal opportunity for all souls; this is the nature and office of Mashiyach, and this is what makes the value and importance of Mashiyach different from all other "saviors." Mashiyach is the mediator for all and the standard he established is set equally for all; anything less than this is simply politics.

Founders of the all Gentile Church

Many religious customs within the Christian churches are based on the counsel of "early post-apostolic writers," like Ignatius, Marcion and Tertullian. Regardless of how much a person may choose to agree or disagree with some of their conclusions, the fact of the matter is these men have shaped Christianity into what it is today. There are some very basic themes threaded throughout their writings and those of their contemporaries which provide insights about the spirit in which they wrote. One of the most common threads, as you are about to see, is that the Gentile church founders severely opposed Jewish culture and law, as do most Christian pastors today. Most church founders appear to have been utterly unable to distinguish between Rabbinical Tradition (halakha) and Torah observance as taught by Y'shua and the Shlichim. For the sake of brevity we'll look at three of the most influential founders of what is now referred to as the "Christian" church.

Ignatius of Antioch 35-107 CE

Ignatius was considered as an "auditor" and "disciple" of John, although he never met John personally nor studied under him. Ignatius, in fact, pioneered the Greek-based Christian religion. He was very instrumental in the assimilation of paganism into early Christianity, as you will see, and he packaged Christianity for a Greco-Roman Hellenic culture. Ignatius saw Jewish followers of Y'shua as nothing but legalists and Judaizers. He despised the observance of Shabbat in favor of the Ishtar sunrise "Lord's day" Sun-Day. Theologians claim that, "it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the importance of the Ignatian letters to modern Christian institutions." Ignatius promoted the "infallibility of the church" and the "universal church." If there ever was a hierarchy loving "Christian" politician with a Hellenistic autocratic mindset, it was Ignatius who taught that deacons, presbyters and bishops were a separate category of people infused with Jesus-like authority to be lords over people. He even gave himself the nickname Theophoros (the God-bearer). Ignatius taught that "without the bishop's supervision, no baptisms or love feasts are permitted" and he believed Mary to be the eternal virgin mother of God. Below are a few samples from his writings:

In his letter to the Magnesians Ignatius writes:

4:2 even as some persons have the bishop's name on their lips, but in everything act apart from him.
4:3 Such men appear to me not to keep a good conscience, forasmuch as they do not assemble themselves together lawfully according to commandment. (i.e. the commandment of "the hierarchy")

8:1 Be not seduced by strange doctrines nor by antiquated fables, which are profitless.
8:2 For if even unto this day we live after the manner of Judaism, we avow that we have not received grace: (Ignatius taught that grace was invented in the "New Testament" and wasn't present in "Judaism")

9:1 If then those who had walked in ancient practices attained unto newness of hope, no longer observing sabbaths but fashioning their lives after the Lord's day. (Y'shua kept the Seventh Day Shabbat according his Father YHWH's Commandment, as did Paul; so then which "Lord" would Ignatius be referring?)

10:5 Therefore put away the vile leaven which hath waxed stale and sour, and betake yourselves to the new leaven, which is Jesus Christ. (Evidently Ignatius was ignorant of the fact that "leaven"

represents sin, so in reality he promoted a new sin under the label of "Jesus Christ")
10:7 It is monstrous to talk of Jesus Christ and to practice Judaism. (Ignatius projected his anti-Torah image of "Jesus" upon the Jewish Mashiyach; he is a forefather of "replacement theology" and utterly incapable of discerning between Torah and religious traditions.)
10:8 For Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity, wherein {every tongue} believed and {was gathered together} unto God. (Y'shua and his disciples were in fact a sect of Judaism; Ignatius was instrumental in fashioning a sect of Greek based "Christianity.")

Ignatius to the Philadelphians:

6:1 But if any one propound Judaism unto you, hear him not:
6:2 for it is better to hear Christianity from a man who is circumcised than Judaism from one uncircumcised.
6:3 But if either the one or the other speak not concerning Jesus Christ, I look on them as tombstones and graves of the dead, whereon are inscribed only the names of men.
6:4 Shun ye therefore the wicked arts and plottings of the prince of this world, lest haply ye be crushed by his devices, and wax weak in your love. (To make such a statement Ignatius was obviously up against "uncircumcised" Gentiles who kept Torah and the circumcised Jews who followed Y'shua; both could potentially have been followers of the original Netzari Faith)

Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans:

6:9 because they allow not that the eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins, and which the Father of His goodness raised up. (Ignatius teaches that the eucharist and "flesh" of Jesus is "holy," and cannot distinguish between the nephesh, neshama and Ruach haKodesh; therefore, he maintains his pagan ideology and simply projects it onto Mashiyach.)

8:2 Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the Apostles;
8:3 and to the deacons pay respect, as to God's commandment.
8:4 Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop.
8:5 Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it.
8:6 Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be;
8:7 even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal Church. (Ignatius is credited for being the first person to mention the "Catholic church," but notice also how he twists "God's commandment to elevate the authority of his hierarchy)
8:8 It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast;
8:9 but whatsoever he shall approve, this is well-pleasing also to God; (Ignatius is one of the biggest heroes of Christo-Paganism because he installed veneration of the hierarchy of man. His followers wear labels such as Pope and Reverend which is high-handed blasphemy as these titles are exclusive to YHWH and His Mashiyach. Every religion has one form of Priesthood or another but, of course, those who are called of Mashiyach are given their authority through Mashiyach, and certainly not according to man's hierarchy.)

Ignatius to Polycarp

6:1 Give ye heed to the bishop, that God also may give heed to you.
6:2 I am devoted to those who are subject to the bishop, the presbyters, the deacons.

In this letter Ignatius gives directives to Polycarp who is in the historical record for passionately resisting the Ishtar (Easter) celebration of Gentile Christians. Polycarp made a special trip to Rome to exhort the Church to continue observing Pesach according to Torah! Polycarp and Ignatius appear to be in two very different camps, yet it seems Ignatius is on a letter writing campaign to make himself appear as an authority of the church and install himself as a key

element (or perhaps was painted into this caricature by later Catholic theologians). Nevertheless, the writings of Ignatius are one of the earliest deficits to the original teachings of Mashiyach and Paul, regardless as to how his letters may have been manipulated to suit the founders of the Catholic Church. The fact of the matter is that church hierarchy, massive cathedrals, wickedness within church leadership and outright malice against the Torah had to start somewhere, and the evidence clearly points to such men at this time in history.

For those who postulate that the Catholic Church began in the Fourth Century, they've obviously not read "Ignatius" who appears to be the quintessential Catholic. Ignatius curried favor by his ostentatious copying of Paul's style of speech and then morphing himself into the likeness of Paul's authority within "the Church." While claiming to be nobody special, Ignatius wrote great swelling letters to the early churches, clearly seeking political hierarchical authority. On this note we must always remember that among the early "post-apostolic founders" one can never assume anything to be true, because each and every account has been twisted, reinvented and rewritten by various theologians to suit their religious ideology. According to Catholic "perjurymen" who slandered and defamed the characters of honorable men of the Bible, Apostle Paul converted and became a Roman Catholic and Peter was the first Pope….As abominable and despicable as the idolatry loving Vatican is, it's not too difficult to imagine what Peter and Paul would do if they walked into a modern day Catholic church and saw the images and idols covering the walls, or what manner of paganism the "post-apostolic" leaders have invented for themselves.

Marcion 110-160 AD

Marcion coined the terms "Old" and "New" Testament. The son of a bishop from Sinope (on the Black Sea), he was a wealthy ship-owner who made large and welcomed contributions to the Roman churches. For awhile, he waited in the wings as a highly respected member of the Christian community; but finally "showed his true colors" during a hearing before Christian leadership in 144 CE. Since the hearing ended with some of Marcion's theories receiving the "thumbs down," he aggressively went out on his own, propagating his new concepts of Christianity which rapidly took root throughout the Roman Empire. Using maligned teachings of Paul, who he believed to be the only Apostle who actually understood the teachings of Y'shua, Marcion set out to free the Christian church from "false Jewish doctrines." By the end of the Second Century Marcion was challenging the mainstream Christian Churches and rapidly pushing them into the background with his own popular all-Gentile gospel.

In every city of significance Marcionites set up their own churches in defiance (competition with) of the "other Christians" and they flourished right into the Tenth Century. Even today Marcion's theology, which taught that instruction within the Old and New Testaments could not be reconciled to each other, still plays a very distinguished role within most denominations of Christianity. Like most Christian leaders, Marcion was very ignorant of basic Torah principles. Here's a sample of his teachings that heavily influenced Christian theology:

1. Marcion taught: Moses' form of law was "eye for an eye," but that Jesus reversed this. BUT: It is written in Torah; *"Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake"* (Exodus 21:23-26). Eye for eye, tooth for tooth means to render equivalent compensation toward the value of loss, even set the servant or maid free. Eye for eye does NOT ever suggest physical punishment to avenge the loss; this is NOT what YHWH instructs nor was this ever practiced within the Israel of Elohim. In Marcion's day Gentiles were an easy prey to his false teachings because, as today, most have very little or no Torah consciousness to determine even basic halakha.

2. Marcion taught: Elisha caused bears to devour the little children, but Jesus said, "let the little children come to me." BUT: It is written in the Tanakh that Elisha cursed the mocking

children in the Name of YHWH and 42 children were torn apart by two she-bears. The number 42 represents disaster towards those who rebel against YHWH. There were 42,000 Ephraimites slain in Judges 12:6 and 42 relatives of Ahaziah were killed by Jehu in 2 Kings 10:14. According to Revelation 11:2, the Gentiles wreak havoc and do all manner of blasphemy for 42 months. The number 42 can also be a *remez* (hint) that refers to pagan Gentiles forcing people to worship their Jesus god at pain of death. Elisha raised a child from the dead and showed great compassion for children; but Marcion, levied a wicked judgment against YHWH.

3. Marcion taught that: Joshua stopped the sun in its path to continue a slaughter of the enemy, but Paul said, "don't let the sun go down on your wrath." BUT: Joshua would have no success in "stopping the sun" on his own strength. More people died when YHWH sent hailstones down on them, than were slain by Joshua's armies (Joshua 10:11-13). The hailstones in Joshua 10:11 also remind us of Sodom and Gomorrah, not a popular motif with Marcion and friends who lived in a culture where sodomy was commonplace. Joshua and Y'shua Mashiyach share the same Hebrew name; Joshua is a very powerful type of Mashiyach. YHWH instructed the Israelites to go to war and *"destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves (statues)"* so His people wouldn't be tempted to sacrifice unto pagan gods or make molten images (see Sh'mot/Exodus 34:12-17*). "And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he gives of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not: Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people"* (Vayikra/Leviticus 20:4, 5). Petra, Jordan, retains the ruins of the places where pagans sacrificed the blood and live, beating hearts of their children to a sun deity. YHWH commanded that such wickedness be wiped off the face of the Earth for purposes of His ultimate justice. Those who disapprove of YHWH's Judgments are both ignorant and rebellious towards the intent of YHWH's Commandments and His Mashiyach.

4. Marcion taught: The "Old Testament" permitted divorce and polygamy; but the "New Testament" denies both. BUT: It is written that Moshe permitted divorce because of hardness of heart, and most Christians are unaware of the process and/or consequences of seeking release from a marriage covenant. The John 8 fallacy of a woman caught in adultery was inserted into Christian Bibles as a theological proof text that there are no consequences for Christian adulterers. The levels of adultery within the Christian Churches was as uncontrollable in the early days of Gentile Churches as it is today; so the "post-apostolic" founders made it appear that adultery will be forgiven by "Jesus". In terms of polygamy YHWH states in D'varim/Deuteronomy 17:17 that "you shall not multiply wives."[55]

5. Marcion taught: Moses enforced the Jewish Sabbath and Law, but Jesus freed believers from both. BUT: It is written in Torah that the Shabbat was given by YHWH at the Creation of the world for all eternity. The Tanakh (Isaiah 56, 58, 66) tells of Gentiles observing the Seventh Day Shabbat through the Light of Mashiyach! It is written in the Renewed Covenant that Mashiyach and all the Shlichim observed Shabbat and also brought Gentiles into synagogues on Shabbat to learn about the Kingdom of Elohim. Clearly it was the assimilation of pagan culture into Gentile Christianity that changed worship from Shabbat to Sunday. When Mashiyach proclaimed to be "master" of Shabbat, he was exercising his authority regarding the way Shabbat is to be observed, and he demonstrated this by his life! He did not "do away with Shabbat" – he, in fact, resurrected Shabbat from the clutches of dead religious traditions and magnified Shabbat (see Isaiah 42:21).

6. Marcion taught: God commanded that no work be done on the Sabbath, yet he told the Israelites to carry the ark around Jericho seven times on the Sabbath. BUT: Scripture does

55 Please also see the Scripture note regarding the attestation of this story (John 7:53-8:11) in both the earliest Greek and Aramaic sources. Such may be relevant to the growing Gentile political agendas being discussed here.

not say that the seven days around Jericho began on the first day of the week (Sunday); therefore, one cannot assume that the seventh day at Jericho was on a weekly Shabbat. The Israelites had just observed Pesach and therefore the seven-day cycle round Jericho may have started on the first day of Chag haMatzah. On the seventh day of this Feast the Israelites defeated the armies of Pharaoh and celebrated the victory; on the seventh day of this same Feast Jericho was defeated. YHWH gave the command to march and He pulled down the walls of Jericho. Marcion chose to judge YHWH's authority and speak evil against the Most High Elohim.

7. Marcion taught: Graven images were prohibited by the 10 Commandments, yet Moses was instructed to fashion a bronze serpent. BUT: The bronze serpent on the pole was the visible antidote to the venom of the snake. Those who looked to the bronze serpent were saved from certain death. Those who look to the *suffering servant* on the pole are saved from the bite of the serpent haSatan. Marcion indicted YHWH for wrongdoing, regardless of that fact that the Israelites weren't worshipping the bronze serpent; neither did Marcion respect the fact that YHWH's Word is Sanctified by His *Perfection* which is revealed in Mashiyach.

8. Marcion taught: The God of the Old Testament could not have been omniscient, otherwise he would not have asked, *"Adam where are you?"* (Genesis 3:9) BUT: It is written that YHWH is an all merciful and loving Father; therefore, He gave Adam and Eve a few moments to compose themselves before having to approach Him. They had fallen into transgression and were devastated and ashamed, as illustrated by their nakedness. But, with an apparent brazen hatred towards YHWH, Marcion and Christo-Paganism invented a false religious premise from which they fashioned their own god unto themselves whom they named Je-Zeus.

9. Marcion taught: The God of the Old Testament was a ruthless God of vengeance, cruelty and wrath, but Jesus was full of grace and compassion. BUT: Y'shua, is the Word or Mind of YHWH who became flesh and dwelled among us; these are ONE, yet Marcion taught that God exists in "persons." Marcion's theology divided the "Godhead" against itself, following a very common pagan mindset that the gods are at war with each other. The Gentile culture that birthed Marcion viewed the Hebrew (One God) based faith as old and passé. Marcion's carnal perspective of YHWH left an indelible mark within Christianity that is commonplace to this very day.

10. Marcion coined the terms Old and New Testament. BUT: It is written that YHWH would bring a Renewed Covenant to His people and therefore the onus was on His people to extend the invitation of the Kingdom of Elohim to the rest of the world. By replacing the word "Covenant" with "Testament" Marcion and other pagan theologians wrestled Jeremiah 31:31-34 away from the foundational teachings of Y'shua and the Shlichim. Most Christians had no access to the Tanakh (Hebrew Scriptures) and would not know that ***Brit Chadasha*** means "Renewed Covenant" and that Mashiyach would come to write Torah upon the hearts of his followers. By replacing the word covenant with testament Marcion theologically divided Jesus and his followers away from YHWH the Father and turned him into a self sustained deity that opposed the "the Old Testament." Everyone who ever used the terms "Old and New Testament" can thank Marcion the heretic for implanting such contrary values against the Unified and Eternal Word of the Living Elohim.

Polycarp, who was mentioned earlier, referred to Marcion as "the firstborn of the devil." But, Marcion's *judenrein* (Jew-free) all-Gentile churches became very popular among early Gentile Christians, and one of the largest Christian denominations on Earth. Marcion was inventor and/or the major contributor to dispensationalism, supercessionism, and replacement theology – all of which are extremely popular among the vast majority of Christians today, preached in nearly every church.

Tertullian 155-230 CE

Tertullian was born into a mainstream Gentile pagan family, but became a devout Christo-Pagan. Like Marcion he also found mainstream Christianity intolerable so he set out to make broad sweeping reform. According to Jerome, Tertullian was "distressed by the envy and laxity of the clergy of the Roman church" so he joined with the Montanists (also known as the Cataphrygian Heresy) founded by Montanus. Montanus was formerly following the pagan mother goddess of fertility named Cybele where he learned plenty of things to adapt into Christianity. One of Montanus' "achievements" was to fall into a trance and prophesy under the influence of the "Holy Ghost," insisting that his utterances were the voice of the "Holy Ghost." Modern day "tongue-speaking" Pentecostal or Charismatic denominations apparently have very similar experiences to those of the church of Montanus. As Montanus' theologies and influence advanced, he was joined by Priscilla and Maximilla, who abandoned their husbands to follow the call of his "prophetic" ministry.

Tertullian, though, while fumbling in all manner of paganism and spiritism also picked up an "anointing" of the "Holy Ghost" and through demonic inspiration, he compartmentalized the "Godhead" and coined the word "Trinity" which, of course, is one of the most cherished doctrines of the Christian Church today. The "persons of the trinity" doctrine flourishes in the hierarchy-based Christian religion, which also views itself as a pyramid structure. Tertullian wrote using puns, wit, sarcasm and a continual pounding of his opponents with invective and platitude; yet he was the architect of the pinnacle doctrine of Christianity, the "persons of the Trinity." Tertullian theology is very akin to the likes of Nimrod, Semiramis and Tammuz who were the original trinity of Babylon and he inserted the "persons" of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, making him extremely popular among pagan Gentile Christians.

In these "end times" it is imperative to understand that these three men are "pillars of the Church." Their teachings have influenced every soul who has ever called themselves Christian in the last 1,800 years. These church founders who are venerated by Christendom displayed unfathomable resentment toward the original Netzari Jewish followers of Y'shua – not because they happened to be Jews who followed Y'shua, but because they "accepted Christ without ceasing to observe the old law." Certainly there are exceptions, but still today the vast majority of Christianity maintains a very deep-seated, vitriolic anti-Semitism towards Jews and Torah which was planted within the Church by such men as these.

Lest anyone think that the times have changed regarding the "Christian" disdain for the authority of the inerrant Word of YHWH, here's a quote from the head of the largest Christian institute on Earth:

"The fundamentalist approach is dangerous, for it is attractive to people who look to the Bible for ready answers to the problems of life. It can deceive these people, offering them interpretations that are pious but illusory, instead of telling them that the Bible does not necessarily contain an immediate answer to each and every problem. Without saying as much in so many words, fundamentalism actually invites people to a kind of intellectual suicide. It injects into life a false certitude, for it unwittingly confuses the divine substance of the biblical message with what are in fact its human limitations." (Quoted from The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church; Pontifical Biblical Commission, presented on March 18, 1994)

Contrary to the wickedness of religious men YHWH declares: *"...man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of YHWH does man live"* (D'varim/ Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4). Our Father in Heaven wants people to look to Him rather than "old time religion" or "the new science" that claims to have all the answers for humanity but is progressively destroying the Earth and setting forth greater and greater immorality.

"…Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which you shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this Torah. For it is not a vain thing for you;

because it is your life: and through this thing you shall prolong your days in the land, where you go over Jordan to possess it" (D'varim/Deut. 32:46, 47).

Christo-Paganism denotes the assimilation of paganism into Christianity, introduced into the world's churches by the aforementioned, highly venerated post-apostolic founders of Gentile Christianity. Traditions like erecting images of Mary or Jesus, painting Easter eggs, going to church on Sunday, anti-Semitism, erecting and decorating Christmas trees or dressing up as Santa Claus all originated within paganism and are the exact opposite to the Kingdom of Elohim. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Christians have willfully adopted these forms of paganism as part of their "Christian tradition." These Church "founders" never met the original Shlichim, nor did they have YHWH's instructions in righteousness written upon their hearts. In fact, these early Christian philosophers and opportunists had no more first-hand knowledge of Y'shua's or Paul's teachings than theologians today. But nowadays, by accessing the original Aramaic Writings, we can compare for ourselves the writings of the post-apostolic founders of the modern "Christian gospel" and see that is very far removed from the original Netzari Faith.

Regardless of the rude, crude and hateful attacks against the Netzari Faith by a multitude of naysayers who are ignorant of the Scriptures, there is a growing number of Jews and Gentiles who are returning to YHWH and living the Faith of Y'shua Mashiyach that was *once delivered to the righteous*. Clearly there is a very stark difference between what the post-apostolic founders of the Gentile Church taught and what the original Shlichim (Sent Ones) of Mashiyach lived and taught. The Netzari movement in our day is a fulfillment of the following Prophecy:

"O YHWH, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things where there is no profit. Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is YAHWEH" (Jeremiah 16:19-21).

Gentiles

Y'shua stated in Matthew 21:43 that the Kingdom is given to "*a people*" who bear fruit. This "people," which obviously includes Gentiles, is known as a "*Kedoshim*" (Set Apart People), who keep the Commandments (Torah) of Elohim ***and*** have the testimony of Mashiyach Y'shua (Rev. 12:17). Gentiles originally met along with Netzari Jews in the synagogues as shown in Acts 13:42; 14:1; 17:1-4; 18:4; and 19:8-10, and are equals in the Malchut Elohim as "Fearers of Elohim." It would seem that such basic facts would be very evident to anyone who has ever studied a Bible, but in the world of religion many prejudices exist between Jew and Gentile.

The "light" of Mashiyach was presented to Adam and Eve who were neither Jewish nor Gentile. From their first breath of life, Adam and Eve enjoyed spiritual intimacy with YHWH and after their transgression atonement was provided for them according to Mashiyach. However, since YHWH set a Covenant Standard through the line of Judah and within tribes of Israel, the term Gentile came to denote all souls who were not born into the commonwealth of Israel. However, all who belong to Mashiyach are the Israel of Elohim, and are therefore no longer Gentile, per se, but "Fearers of Elohim."

Neither Jews or Gentiles have their own exclusive Covenant with YHWH. There is no discrimination in Torah or the Renewed Covenant against non-Jewish converts of Mashiyach; but neither is it acceptable for Gentiles to discriminate against Jews. These important directives are found in Jeremiah 50:6, Isaiah 42:1-6; 49:6; 60:3; Jeremiah 16:19; Hosea 8:8; Micah 5:8; Matthew 15:24, and in many other places in Torah. Because Mashiyach Y'shua presented "*light*" to Jews first, it is imperative for non-Jews to comprehend the "roots" of Mashiyach and the Renewed Covenant according to Torah in the original Hebrew and Aramaic languages. This is

important because counterfeit religions have attempted to displace the original Faith by removing Y'shua and his teachings out from the original context of Torah and reinventing a different Messiah within an anti-Torah culture. Therefore, the challenge today for both Jew and Gentile is to depart from all manner of man's religion and turn to Mashiyach according to Torah.

Scripturally speaking, the term "Gentile" bears heavier weight regarding a spiritual state (heathen) rather than one's birth lineage; as a matter of fact, there is no such thing as a "Gentile" in the Kingdom of Elohim. When a person comes to Mashiyach and has Torah written upon their heart they become a new creation in Mashiyach. Old things have passed away and behold, all things are made new, which is why Gentiles who follow Mashiyach are referred to as *"fearers of Elohim."* It is utterly futile for Gentiles to believe that because they are not born Jewish that they are not required to have Torah written upon their hearts. In reality the first Gentile who put his Faith in Mashiyach Y'shua was Qurnelius who *"was righteous and feared Elohim, he and all his household"* (Acts 10:2) and many *"Greeks who feared Elohim*" were also observing Torah (Acts 17:4). See also Acts 2:5; 10:2, 7; 13:43; 16:14; 17:7; 18:7; Hebrews 11:7.

Ger Toshav

Throughout Torah one can find mention of the stranger, alien, sojourner or temporary resident (ger toshav) who joins him or herself with Israel and becomes part of the Israel of Elohim, as one people. *"One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the **ger** (temporary resident) that **toshav** (sojourns) among you"* (Sh'mot/Ex. 12:49). Regardless as to what Christian and Rabbinical traditions say, Torah tells us that the Ger belongs to YHWH just as much as those who are as blood line Jews or Israelites. Even King Dawid referred to himself as a Ger.

"Hear my prayer, O YHWH, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a Ger (temporary resident) with you, and a Toshav (sojourner), as all my fathers were" (Psalm 38:12). When Dawid says "all of my fathers" he means his fathers going back to Adam, Noach, Awraham, Yitzkhakh, Ya'akov. All who enter into the Kingdom of Elohim are considered Ger Toshav; all were/are strangers and aliens to this world as Rav Shaul said of Awraham: *"By faith Awraham, when he was called, obeyed and departed to the place which he was to receive for an inheritance: and he departed while he knew not whither he was going. By faith he became a resident in the land that was promised him as in a foreign land; and abode in tents with Yitz'chak and Ya'akov, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for the city that has a foundation of which the builder and maker is Elohim"* (Hebrews 11:8-10). That foreign land that Rav Shaul refers to is a type of the Malchut (Kingdom of) Elohim as it pertains to the Olam Haba (world to come). All of YHWH's people are pilgrims and sojourners when it comes to the Kingdom of Elohim as the Kingdom is outside of this world's system. Whether Jews or non-Jewish souls, it is irrelevant from which background a person enters.

There was a "mixed multitude" (erev rav) at Mt. Sinai who fled Egypt along with Israel. Rabbis even suggest that Torah was given in 70 languages so the "mixed multitude" and all nations could hear and understand Torah. Torah states that the "mixed multitude" who sojourned with Israel entered into Life, not as second class citizens but as equals who are considered the Special Treasure of YHWH. Neither Calev nor Ruth were Jewish by birth, however, they both fulfilled extremely important roles in the Kingdom of Elohim, indicating that YHWH and His Mashiyach have made a place for all souls to enter into the common good of the Kingdom of Elohim.

Throughout the prophets, especially in Isaiah who addresses this theme most often, there is considerable mention of the role that Gentiles play in the Malchut Elohim. After revealing the Netzer in Isaiah 11, Isaiah goes on to say, *"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Goy (Gentiles) seek: and his rest shall be glorious"* (Isaiah 11:8). Goy is used in Scripture to denote nations, heathen, Gentiles or people; when Greeks came to follow Y'shua they were no longer referred to as Goy (Gentiles), but as

Elohim fearers. *"I YHWH have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and give you for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house"* (Isaiah 42:6, 7).

YHWH showed Isaiah how the Gentiles were to be brought out of paganism and all manner of false religion, and offered a heritage along with the Jewish people. *"Neither let the son of the stranger, that has joined himself to YHWH, speak, saying, YHWH has utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For this is what YHWH says unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to YHWH, to serve him, and to love the name of YHWH, to be His servants, every one that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar; for mine House shall be called the House of prayer for all people. YHWH Elohim which gathers the outcasts of Israel says; Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him"* (Isaiah 56:3-8). Clearly YHWH intended the Gentiles to enter into Covenant with Him, which means to ***observe His Torah*** and to *"keep the Sabbath from polluting it."*

Most believers realize that we are living in the *acharit hayamim* (latter days) and as such we are entering into a time for the fulfillment of many prophecies including; *"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of YHWH shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations (Goy) shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, and to the house of the El of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the Torah shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of YHWH from Jerusalem"* (Micah 4:1-2). The mountain is a symbol of YHWH's government authority which means that many will seek the Kingdom of Elohim which is established above all of man's kingdoms and religions. Although Torah and the Word of YHWH have been trodden asunder by most Christians (most are currently observing only 61 percent of Torah) the fact remains that Torah will be acknowledged and accepted by many Christians who realize that they have never been shown the deeper application and meaning of Torah. Notice how the Word of YHWH is equated with Torah, but the Word of YHWH is Mashiyach! Torah and Mashiyach are One and the same Spirit; they are perfectly unified as One. It is man's "religion" that has pitted them against each other.

In Brit Chadasha (Renewed Covenant) Writings when Gentiles (Ger Toshav) entered into the Kingdom through Mashiyach, they were given the designation of "Fearers of Elohim": *"Now there was a certain man in Caesarea, a centurion, whose name was Qurnelius, from that band of soldiers which is called Italiqa. And he was righteous and feared Elohim, he and all his household. And he did many alms among the people, and he beseeched Elohim at all times"* (Acts 10:1, 2). Some might dispute this and suggest that a Ger Toshav is not equivalent to a Gentile; however, this is a moot point if we consider what YHWH says about the Jewish people: *"Israel is swallowed up: now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure."* (Hosea 8:8). Jews went into the dispersion because they threw off YHWH's Torah and broke Covenant with Him, and they have been punished in every generation since. Had Jews as a race been obedient, they would have lifted up Mashiyach and taught Torah to all who had ears to hear. Many more Gentiles would then be Ger Toshav as they would have access through the Jewish people to learn of YHWH and His Mashiyach; but as it stands today, most Jews are embarrassed to be associated with the Ancient Paths (Jer. 6:16). Many who acknowledge Y'shua as Mashiyach openly break Torah, just as most Christians falsely believe that Y'shua or Paul did away with Torah.

Qurnelius was the first of many Ger Toshav to enter into the Kingdom as witnessed by Mashiyach's talmidim: *"he was **righteous** and **feared Elohim**, he and all his household"* (Acts 10:2). Here are two essential elements of true faith for any Jew or Gentile to be *"righteous and fear Elohim."*

"And while they were departing from their midst, they beseeched from them that they might speak on another Shabbat these words to them. And after the congregation was dismissed, many Yehudeans went after them, and even proselytes who feared Elohim. And they were speaking and persuading them to be adherents of the grace of Elohim. And on another Shabbat all the city gathered to hear the Word of Elohim. And when the Yehudeans saw the large gathering they were filled with envy and they were standing against the words that Polous was speaking. And they were blaspheming" (Acts 13:42-45). Not only Yehudeans but *"even proselytes who feared Elohim"* were meeting together on Shabbat as one people. The proselytes were Gentiles who entered into Covenant with YHWH through Mashiyach Y'shua and observed Shabbat together; they feared Elohim, which means they repented of breaking Torah. It is through Torah that we have the knowledge of sin, so rather than to fear man and do what religion prescribed, many Gentiles turned to YHWH through Mashiyach and entered into the Renewed Covenant which requires Torah to be written upon the heart.

"And on the Shabbat day, we went without the gate of the city to the side of a river, because a house of prayer was seen there. And when we were seated, we conversed with the women who there assembled. And a certain woman who feared Elohim, a seller of purple, whose name was Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, (was there). Her heart our Master opened, and she listened to what Paul spoke. Then she was immersed, and her household…" (Acts 16:13-15). The symbol of entering into a mikveh (living waters) and coming out purified was being practiced for centuries before Y'shua; the candidate arose from the waters renewed unto YHWH and born anew. Lydia "feared Elohim" and therefore presented herself to YHWH according to the requirement of the Word of YHWH (Torah). To Jewish onlookers Lydia's immersion at the side of the river was a mikveh based on Torah (the covenant of immersion [baptism] is Torah). *"And some of them believed, and adhered to Paul and Silas; and of those Greeks who feared Elohim, a great many; and also of noted women, not a few"* (Acts 17:4).

As larger numbers of Gentiles turned to YHWH, the Netzarim Jewish community was being challenged to disciple each new soul into Mashiyach, but a dispute arose regarding the matter of circumcision for Gentiles. Acts 15 records how followers of Y'shua from P'rushim (Pharisaic) background demanded Gentiles be circumcised and keep the Torah of Moshe, but it is clearly particulars of circumcision that were contested, not observance of the Torah of Moshe. *"Because of this <I> say that you should not be those oppressors who from the Gentiles are turning to Elohim. But we will send (word) to them that they should abstain from uncleanness of sacrifices (idols) and from adultery and from things that are strangled and from blood. For from ancient generations in all cities Moshe had preachers in the synagogues that on every Shabbat they read him"* (Acts 15:19-21). These four Commandments provided preliminary elements (initiation) for Gentiles to join with the existing Messianic community. Gentiles were meeting with the Netzarim followers of Y'shua in homes and synagogues and on Shabbat they were learning about Torah (Moshe) in the synagogues, but all-Gentile based Christianity rapidly turned the tables. Not only did the Gentile Church abandon Moses, but they soon began to demand that Jewish followers of Y'shua forsake both Torah and their Jewish heritage.

The true remnant followers of Y'shua are they who sing the *Song of Moshe* (observe Torah) and have the *Testimony of the Lamb* (follow Y'shua). In much of the world today it is non-Jewish followers of Y'shua who are returning to the Netzari Faith and are teaching Jews about Mashiyach and the importance of Torah observance. Many "fearers of Elohim" (Gentiles) are sanctifying the Name of YHWH, observing Shabbat and the Moedim equally alongside Jewish talmidim. *"Now I say, that Y'shua the Mashiyach ministered to the circumcision in behalf of the truth of Elohim*

in order to confirm the promise (made) to the fathers; And that the Gentiles might glorify Elohim for his mercies upon them, as it is written: I will confess to you among the Gentiles, and to your name will I sing psalms. And again he said: Rejoice, you Gentiles, with His people. And again he said: Praise MASTER YHWH, all you Gentiles; (and) laud him, all you nations. And again Isaiah said: There will be a root of Jesse; and he that shall arise will be a prince for the Gentiles; and in him will the Gentiles hope" (Romans 15:8-12).

Many Gentiles have been led by the Ruach haKodesh into Kingdom through Mashiyach and delight in the Torah of YHWH. *"But I say: Did not Israel know? First, Moshe said thus: I will awaken your emulation by a people which is not a people; and by a disobedient people I will provoke you. And Isaiah was bold, and said: I was seen by those who sought me not; and I was found by those who inquired not for me. But to Israel, he said: All the day have I stretched out my hands to a contentious and disobedient people"* (Romans 10:19-21). According to Rav Shaul the Gentiles, by turning to YHWH also create opportunity for the Jewish people to make teshuva: *"But I say: Have they so stumbled as to fall entirely? May it never be! Rather, by their stumbling, life has come to the Gentiles for (awakening) their jealousy. And if their stumbling was riches to the world, and their condemnation riches to the Gentiles; how much more their completeness?"* (Romans 11:11-12) Those who break Torah can in no way make anyone jealous for Mashiyach or Torah. Paul is clearly talking about the Gentiles attaining righteous qualities that come about by having Torah written upon the heart.

Although Jewish and Christian religious traditions deem that Gentiles are under a different covenant than Jews, the fact of the matter is there is only One Kingdom, One Mashiyach and One Covenant. There can never be one law for one person and a different law for another within a *united* Kingdom; this is absolutely absurd thinking and foolish to postulate yet it is a very common theme within Jewish and Christian religious worlds. The big question in the First Century was not a matter of if, but when the Gentiles would be expected to bear righteous fruit of having Torah written upon their hearts. Clearly there are massive expectations on Jews to live upright and righteous lives in YHWH according to Torah. However, when a Gentile soul enters into the Kingdom of Elohim after a life of paganism, polytheism and all manner of Torahlessness, then logic and reason would suggest that people need time to grow in Torah and develop an understanding of what it means to have Torah written upon their hearts.

Jews are called to enter into Covenant, be circumcised at eight days old, observe Torah and follow Mashiyach; this is what YHWH intended for every Jewish soul. But YHWH is not a "respecter of persons" – He is Creator of both Jew and Gentile which is why Mashiyach warned the chief priests and Pharisees in the Temple: *"…I say to you that the Kingdom of Elohim will be taken from you and will be given to a people who bear fruit"* (Matthew 21:43). Therefore, if the Kingdom of Elohim were to be taken from the Pharisees for denying the cornerstone who is Y'shua Mashiyach, then it would also impossible for Gentiles to break the Torah that is incumbent upon Jews to observe, and somehow bear fruit without Torah! Those who "bear fruit" are righteous Jews and Gentiles who have Torah written upon their hearts and who bear fruit of the Love of YHWH and love for their fellow man which is specified in the Terms and Conditions of Torah Covenant, which is Mashiyach.

Whether you are a Jew who is taking the heat from your Jewish community for putting your trust in Y'shua Mashiyach, or a Gentile who is being abused by family members and friends for your love of Torah, the Kingdom of Elohim is all about bearing righteous fruit and being Set Apart unto YHWH and His Mashiyach.

Good News

The Good News (Gospel) originated in *Gan Eden* when YHWH introduced Adam and Eve to the *"Tree of Life"* and revealed to them that the fruit of that Tree would cause them to live forever. That Tree, of course, represented the *Malchut Elohim* (Kingdom of Elohim), which has no beginning or end. The *Netzer* (Branch or sprout) which was spoken of in Isaiah 11:1 is the prophetic birth of this Tree of Life through Mashiyach and which is the foundation of the Good News, but clearly the Good News did not originate at the coming of Y'shua: *"Because Elohim knew beforehand that the Gentiles would be declared righteous through faith that he first preached to Awraham, as it is said in the Set Apart Scriptures, "In you shall all the Gentiles be blessed"* (Galatians 3:8). The KJV and other translations read, "*preached before the gospel unto Awraham,*" plainly teaching us that Awraham responded to the Good News about 2,000 years before Y'shua's sufferings!

Most Christians believe that Mashiyach is the Word of YHWH who existed before the foundations of the world. Wherever Mashiyach is, there is Good News; the two are inseparable. Mashiyach has always been intimately connected to his people. He was and is the Right Hand of YHWH and every blood sacrifice that was ever made in the Name of YHWH for any purpose, past, present and future, was done "in" Mashiyach. Faith in YHWH provided forgiveness and it was that same faith in YHWH that provided the complete confidence that our sacrifices and prayers would be accepted. But the sacrifice itself is only a token of atonement; in itself a sacrifice could do nothing unless the intent of the heart was right with YHWH. Without faith it is impossible to please YHWH. The ancients, our forefathers knew very well that their sacrifices by faith were demonstrations of their obedience, and all pointed to the greater and more perfect offering.

"And they searched for the time which the Spirit of the Mashiyach dwelling in them did show and testify when the sufferings of the Mashiyach were to occur, and his subsequent glory. And it was revealed to them (in regard to) all they were searching that, not for themselves were they inquiring, but for us they were prophesying of those things which are now manifested to you by means of the things we have announced to you by the Ruach haKodesh sent from heaven; which things the Messengers also desire to look into" (1 Peter 1:11-12). The Spirit of Mashiyach dwelling in our forefathers is the Good News received: Adam, Noah, Awraham, Yitzkhakh, Ya'akov, Moshe, Yehoshua, King Dawid, Daniel and all the Prophets of YHWH knew the Good News and responded with all their hearts, souls, might and minds. Daniel, for instance, saw Mashiyach in visions: those who were cast into the fiery furnace were joined by *"one like the Son of Elohim"* (Daniel 3:25) who is Mashiyach. Most Christians and Jews know very well that the Tanakh is all about Mashiyach.

"For to us also is the announcement, as well as to them: but the Word they heard did not profit them because it was not mingled with the faith of those who heard it" (Hebrews 4:2). Again the KJV inserts, *"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them:"* Rav Shaul makes it clear that it's not good enough to hear the Truth and accept it intellectually; the Good News is activated only when we exercise Faith, which means we observe Torah and live according to the Word of YHWH. This is the requirement on our part to participate in the Good News.

The majority of Christians are aware of the vital importance of a *mikveh* (baptism), which is a total immersion of the physical body in living water. This is an outward sign that is made after there is a change to the inner man. Once he has repented of his sin and dedicated himself to Mashiyach, there is no other action that is more indicative of one who has received the Good News than to be immersed into the Kingdom of Elohim. *"And, my Brothers, I would have you know, that our fathers were all of them under the cloud, and they all passed through the sea; And they were all immersed by Moshe, in the cloud and in the sea; And they all ate the same spiritual food; And they all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that attended them, and that rock was the Mashiyach"* (1 Corinthians 10:1-4). All the Israelites who

passed between the parted waters were immersed into the Good News. They had returned to their ancestral spiritual heritage of Awraham through the leading of Moshe Rabbeinu. *"Your father Awraham did long to see my day, and he saw it and rejoiced!"* (John 8:45 (56))[56] The Israelites were given every advantage to know and understand the Good News; their own deliverance after participating in the Passover lamb gave them a blood covering which was accepted before YHWH and a substitute for the life of their own first-born sons.

The Scriptures indicate beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Good News originated at the very beginning of time. The True "gospel" has always incorporated YHWH's Torah (instruction in righteousness) in building a relationship between YHWH and humankind. *"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit in you, and cause you to live by my Torah, and ye shall keep my statutes and judgments, and do them"* (Ezekiel 36:26, 27). Here we clearly see the basis of the Good News, that YHWH Himself shows favor and mercy to His people who will live according to His Word. The Good News is the revelation of YHWH's Eternal Grace that saves and empowers His people to be able to stop transgressing (breaking Torah) against Him. Torah is YHWH's blueprint for moral, righteous living. To attempt to annul Torah is to teach a different "gospel" than what the Talmidim (disciples) and Shlichim (Apostles) originally taught.

False gospels preach that Y'shua is "the gospel" and/or that belief alone in Y'shua brings salvation. However, Adam and Eve "got saved" long before Y'shua came to earth because ***YHWH*** is Salvation. Y'shua is the door to salvation but belief in his atoning blood is utterly futile without being "re-born" spiritually and keeping his Father's Commandments (becoming Set Apart). Even the demons believe in YHWH and the fact that there is only One Elohim; but demons are certainly not Set Apart unto YHWH, and therefore belief in itself without a righteous lifestyle is simply false religion. The false gospel has removed the TERMS & CONDITIONS of salvation, covenant and atonement and replaced them with a cerebral belief system or Christian religious label (identity); whereas the Renewed Covenant demands a complete change of lifestyle once Torah (instructions in righteousness) is written upon the heart.

Increased popularity of a false gospel will in no way make it acceptable to YHWH or His Mashiyach. Even if every soul on earth put their faith in a false gospel, it would not cause YHWH to change His Word to comply with man's opinion. YHWH ***Is*** His Word and His Promise and He cannot change Who He Is! The false gospel is a theology that pits Y'shua (Grace) against the Word of YHWH (Torah). Those who lead the charge of the false gospel adamantly speak against the terms and conditions of the Renewed Covenant. The Good News is that YHWH our Creator is a Loving, Merciful and Forgiving Father, which is why "the sacrifices of Elohim are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart." This Love of the Father is clearly demonstrated in Y'shua Mashiyach as an offering for all souls to turn to YHWH, to enter His Kingdom and turn away from transgression of His Word.

Head Coverings

"Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered, dishonors his head."
1 Corinthians 11:4

Much of the contention among believers who wear and those who do not wear head coverings is based on this verse. But as we investigate this matter it becomes very obvious that Rav Shaul made this statement in the context of what was happening at the local level, and he also stated that no one has any right, whatsoever, to be contentious about it.

56 The differing numbering systems reflect the differences between whether the story of the adulteress is included (later Western canon) or excluded (original Aramaic and Greek traditions) in John 8.

YHWH Commanded His priesthood to wear head coverings; *"And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron"* (Exodus 28:4).

The High Priest wore a *nezer* (crown) on top of their *mitre* or turban; *"And you shall put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy nezer (crown) upon the mitre"* (Exodus 29:6; 39:30, 31; Leviticus 8:9). The Hebrew *nezer* comes from the word *nazar* which means to separate and, of course, this head covering and crown distinguishes the High Priest as separated unto YHWH. All of the sons of Aaron also wore head coverings or turbans; *"And for Aaron's sons you shall make coats, and you shall make for them girdles, and turbans shall you make for them, for glory and for beauty. And you shall put them upon Aaron your brother, and his sons with him"* (Exodus 28:40-41). (See also Leviticus 8:13 and Ezekiel 44:18.)

The High Priest was not permitted to remove his head covering even in time of mourning for a loved one: *"And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes"* (Leviticus 21:10). According to Scripture Aaron and his sons wore their head coverings before YHWH while they served in the Tabernacle and while Aaron was in the Holy of Holies, see Exodus 29:38, 43. From these verses a vivid picture emerges of these men wearing head coverings while they served YHWH and prayed and conducted their official duties. It is also interesting to note, then, that by the rules of Leviticus 21:10, High Priest Khayapa was in direct violation of a command to not tear his clothes when Y'shua gave an answer he did not like! (Matthew 26:65/Mark 14:63)

Head coverings and garments symbolized a priests' receipt of YHWH's authority and were symbolic of the spiritual "crowns" He gave each of them. Notice also two distinctions in the headcoverings: *"And you shall make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet,* ***Qodesh l'YHWH****"* (Exodus 28:36). The words *"Set Apart unto YHWH"* upon the head signifies a very distinct designation of ownership or belonging to YHWH. As Aaron fulfilled his role as the high priest he was emulating YHWH's Attributes to the people of Israel and thus YHWH's Name was foremost upon his mind.

Aaron's garments symbolized the robes of the great multitude: *"And after these things, I looked, and lo, a great multitude which no one could number, from all kindreds and nations and tribes and tongues; who stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands"* (Revelation 7:9). The white robes distinguish YHWH's people and are symbolic of the spiritual man. Furthermore, we read in Renewed Covenant writings about the crown of rejoicing, the crown of righteousness, the crown of life, the crown of glory and also of the *"… twenty and four Elders, who were clothed in white robes, and on whose heads were crowns of gold"* (Revelation 4:4). Therefore not only the garments, but the head coverings are mentioned at a time in the future for those who live according to Mashiyach. And also those who are born into the Kingdom of Elohim, *"…will see his face, and his name (will be) on their foreheads"* (Revelation 22:4).

Here is another distinction for the priests' head coverings: *"And you shall put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be"* (Exodus 28:36). Those who are familiar with *tzit tzit* – the fringes which contain the blue thread as a reminder to do all of YHWH's Commandments (Matthew 9:20) – will immediately identify the importance of the blue lace upon the forefront of the mitre. In other words, the head covering was a very special item given by YHWH to the priests to remind them of who they were in Him.

Scriptures indicate that covering the head while praying is showing brokenness and humility while petitioning Elohim: *"And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olives, and wept as he went up, and had his head caphah (covered), and he went barefoot: and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up"* (2 Samuel 15:30). At times of deep anguish and mourning the elders of Israel put dust upon their heads while

petitioning YHWH: *"And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of YHWH until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads"* (Joshua 7:6). (See also Job 2:12; Lam. 2:10; Amos 2:7.) Putting dust upon the head symbolizes mankind's human nature as dust before YHWH; mankind who is powerless without YHWH's help.

In Psalm 140:7 we read that YHWH covered or defended David's head when he went into battle: *"O YHWH, my Master the strength of my salvation, you have covered my head in the day of battle."* The imagery here is manifold as David unashamedly declares that YHWH wins his battles, and that he as the anointed King of Israel wore a crown that symbolized the authority YHWH gave him (see Psalm 110:1).

In Daniel 3:21 we see how the king of Babylon ordered three Jews to be thrown into the fiery furnace, turbans and all: *"Then these men were bound in their coats, their tunics, and their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace."* This is further proof that, like other cultures with their own respective head covering customs, righteous Jews also wore head coverings.

Zechariah had a vision of Joshua the High Priest wearing a head covering: *"And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of YHWH stood by"* (Zechariah 3:5).

In the light of what Scripture teaches about head coverings we must consider Rav Shaul's letter to the spiritually "deteriorated" Corinthians who "were pagans…led away by idols" and who were practicing high-handed rebellion against Mashiyach. Here we discover that other cultures boasted their own head coverings that had very different values than what YHWH instructed. Rav Shaul wrote: *"In short, it is reported, there is sexual sin among you; and such sexual sin as is not even named among the pagans, that a son should even take the wife of his father. And you are puffed up, and have not rather sat down in grief, that he who has done this deed might be separated from you"* (1 Corinthians 5:1, 2). If the recipients of this letter were even worse than unregenerate pagans, then their particular use of "head coverings" must not apply to all the household of the righteous. Rav Shaul would never honor unregenerate souls by using them as model examples for all other assemblies. In reality some pagans (and Jews) abused Jewish customs as a way of renouncing the "G-d of the Jews" and thus showing their displeasure towards YHWH's Word.

Greek scholars point out that the use of *katakalupto* for the male "covering" and *peribolaion* for the female "covering" may have indicated something beneath the text. Apparently, men would wear veils when worshipping pagan female deities to look feminine; and Rav Shaul, of course, taught against this practice. Pagans were known to wear clothing of the opposite sex while performing perverse sexual rituals. In this passage, Rav Shaul does not distinguish the type of head coverings the men were wearing or the reason they were wearing long hair, but given the culture they came out of it is easy to see that what they were doing had nothing to do with Jewish practices. Also, he would have been a hypocrite if on one hand he renounced all long hair on men while also participating in Nazirite offerings (Acts 21:24). Rav Shaul clearly reprimands certain individuals for their *"impurity, the sexual sin, and the lustful acts"* (2 Corinthians 12:21)

The bottom line is, in light of what the Scriptures tell us, it would be very reckless to conclude that Rav Shaul sent out blanket *halakha* for all men everywhere to stop wearing all manner of "head coverings" while praying. YHWH sanctified head coverings as part of man's service unto Him. If Rav Shaul's directive (the Temple was in operation when he wrote this letter) was levied to "*every man,*" then he would have also had two or three witnesses to establish the matter as *halakha* (Matthew 18:20). In reality Rav Shaul would have appealed to Ya'akov HaTsaddiq and other Shlichim in Jerusalem to establish such a directive. But in fact, just a few verses later Rav Shaul issues this statement: *"But if any one is contentious about these things, we on our part*

have no such custom, nor has the assembly of Elohim" (1 Corinthians 11:16). In other words, whatever these people were doing it had not been a custom of the Jews, or any assembly of Elohim prior to this.

Furthermore, the wearing of head coverings by observant Jews and various Christian hierarchies neither validates nor invalidates YHWH's authority. In reality, there are two main purposes for religious men to wear head coverings. First, it symbolizes their authority in these organizations where only the hierarchy is allowed to wear the head coverings. Secondly, some men wear a head covering as a reminder that the Master is above them. Like *tzit tzit*, the head covering reminds them to heed what comes out of their mouths and to judge their actions and cause them to maintain thoughts that are pleasing unto YHWH.

Rav Shaul taught: *"But if any one is contentious about these things, we on our part have no such custom, nor has the assembly of Elohim"* (1 Corinthians 11:16). Clearly, if anyone wants to be contentious about this matter, they cannot presume to use Rav Shaul as their authority.

Hearing in the Ear

"Hearing in the ear" in Romans 10:17 is another example of the kind of double imagery that can be found throughout the Aramaic language; it is not something that carries over well into non-Semitic speech. "Hearing in the ear" could easily be misunderstood to refer to the sound of prayer or scripture operating in a magical, repetitive way; but this was expressly forbidden by Y'shua and Rav Shaul as a pagan practice (Matthew 6:5-8, 1 Corinthians 14:19).

The context of the Hebrew/Aramaic word *shema* is to hear and do. In other words, we don't just interpret the sonic vibrations of a divine scriptural message; we incorporate it into our hearts and carry out its commands. This concept is found throughout Scripture:

"Hear, O Israel: YHWH is our Elohim, YHWH is one. Love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. *These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.* Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. *When YHWH your Elohim brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you – a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant – then when you eat and are satisfied,* be careful that you do not forget YHWH, *who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. Fear YHWH your Elohim,* serve Him only *and take your oaths in his name.* Do not follow other gods, *the gods of the peoples around you; for YHWH your Elohim, who is among you, is a jealous Elohim and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land"* (D'varim/Deut. 6:4-15).

Hearing YHWH's Commandments is not sufficient unless the "hearing" is followed by deliberate action. Such is also the case in Romans 10 where Rav Shaul expands on the hearing in the ear by saying: *"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Mashiyach. But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world." Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moshe says, "I will make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding." And Isaiah boldly says, "I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me." But concerning Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people"* (Romans 10:17-21).

Every student of the Word of YHWH is well aware that when the Kings of Israel were obedient

to YHWH and kept Torah, the nation prospered; but when they refused to do Torah they were punished, often very severely. As we read the history of Israel our hearts are delighted to discover kings who were faithful to YHWH, as in the testimony of Asa. *"And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of YHWH his Elohim: For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the statues: And commanded Judah to seek YHWH Elohim of their fathers, and to **do the Torah** and the commandment"* (2 Chronicles 14:2-5). The word "do" in Hebrew is ***asah***; therefore, Asa was clearly being true to his name. It is not good enough to simply stop doing the old materialistic, relativistic or pagan traditions. Rather, the Household of Faith is called to replace old, worldly things with new life in Mashiyach, which is Torah being written upon the heart by the Ruach haKodesh.

The whole world back then knew that one must *do* the Torah rather that just *hear* it and in addition to the Word of YHWH and the Prophets even a very unlikely source – the king of Persia – said:

*"And you, Ezra, after the wisdom of your Elohim, that is in your hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of your Elohim; and teach them that know them not. And whosoever will not **do the law of your Elohim**, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment"* (Ezra 7:25-26). Even Artaxerxes the King of Persia in his royal commission to Ezra commanded the Israelites to "do" Torah; he did not mince any words. Obviously, doing Torah is a great struggle for those who have not won the victory over their carnal nature, but Y'shua himself and the Apostles weighed in on this matter with very definitive and encouraging words.

Ya'akov Ha Tzadik (James the Just), goes to great lengths to ensure his fellow Hebrew believers in Y'shua avoid the easy interpretation of just "hearing" without follow-through, and his action steps are very evident: *"But be you **doers of the Word**, and not hearers only; and do not deceive yourselves. For if any man shall be a hearer of the Word and not a doer of it, he will be like one who sees his face in a mirror: for he sees himself and passes on and forgets what a man he was. But everyone that looks upon the perfect Torah of liberty and abides in it, is not a hearer of something to be forgotten, but a doer of the things; and he will be blessed in his work."* (Ya'akov 1:23-25).

Rav Shaul added: *"For not the hearers of Torah are righteous before Elohim; but the doers of Torah are being made righteous"* (Romans 2:13). It may appear to some as though Rav Shaul and Ya'akov haTsaddiq are not employing the most eloquent speech in their "doers of Torah" ministries, but "doing Torah" is such a basic and universal concept among the followers of Mashiyach Y'shua that it hardly needs to be stated! If anyone were to be ignorant of such basic principles of the Malchut Elohim, as "doing Torah," surely upon immediate hearing of Torah they would make Teshuva (turn and repent) and immediately stop breaking the Word of YHWH! The doers of Torah are being made righteous because Torah is being written upon their hearts, and these souls respond with Mashiyach-like conduct. Righteousness and separation from sin is what the Kingdom of Elohim is all about.

Y'shua sealed this very important truth with these words: *"For anyone who does **the will of my Father** who is in heaven, is my brother, and my sister, and my mother"* (Matthew 12:50).

How much Torah do Christians already keep?

There is a common lie being spread around by many Christians that "the Law (Torah) is impossible to keep," which is mainly precipitated by ignorance of Torah. In reality there are 613 Mitzvot (Commandments) in Torah. The majority of Christians are keeping about 203 of YHWH's Commandments; a much smaller minority of Christians are keeping as many as 275 of

the Commandments. However, 221 Commandments are applicable only to the Temple, and even if there were a Temple, most of these would apply to Jews only, or persons living outside of Israel; these are "Not Applicable" (N/A) in the list below. An additional 74 of the Commandments "May Not Apply" (MNA), these are special Commandments which involve judges, agricultural matters, or are specifically for men or for women, widows etc. If we examine how much Torah that Christians already keep, factoring in what doesn't apply to them, then we discover that the range is from 66 to 85% of Torah! Judge for yourself; the list below has a YES or NO according to Christian communities that do or do not observe each Commandment. Also note that there are 94 Commandments being "Observed by Christian Minorities" (OCM).

The laws of the Nazarite are voluntary; therefore, we could potentially include these eight Commandments into the category that "May Not Apply," which brings the average up to 69 to 87% of Torah being observed by Christians! The 94 Commandments which fall into the category of being both a YES/NO are presently being observed depending on the individual Christian. Obviously there is a very wide latitude of observance and doctrines within the Christian world. Can Christians observe 100% of Torah that is applicable to them? ABSOLUTELY! Should they? ABSOLUTELY! In fact, Mashiyach *is* the Salvation of YHWH who came to write Torah upon the hearts of his people and to raise up a *Kedoshim* (Set Apart People).

THE 613 MITZVOT OF TORAH - TARYAG MITZVOT

The 248 Positive Mitzvot/Commandments

			YHWH
YES			P 1 Ex. 20:2 To believe in YHWH
YES	**NO**		P 2 De. 6:4 To acknowledge the Unity of YHWH ("Persons" of Trinity or "greater and lesser" God's is polytheism)
YES			P 3 De. 6:5 To love YHWH
YES	**NO**		P 4 De. 6:13 To fear YHWH (Most Christian tradition says love/respect but not fear)
YES			P 5 Ex.23:25; De.11:13; 13:5 To serve YHWH
YES			P 6 De.10:20 To cleave to YHWH
YES			P 7 De.10:20 On taking an oath by YHWH`s Name
YES	**NO**		P 8 De. 28:9 On walking in YHWH`s ways (Torah is the "Way" of YHWH)
YES	**NO**		P 9 Le.22:32 On Sanctifying YHWH`s Name
			TORAH
	NO		P 10 De. 6:7 On reciting the Sh`ma each morning and evening
	NO		P 11 De. 6:7 On studying and teaching Torah
	NO		P 12 De. 6:8 On binding Tefillin on the head
	NO		P 13 De. 6:8 On binding Tefillin on the hand
YES	**NO**		P 14 Nu.15:38 On making Tzitzit with thread of blue, garments corners
	NO		P 15 De. 6:9 On writing the Shema your doorposts and gates
	NO		P 16 De.31:12 On Assembling each 7th year to hear the Torah read
		N/A	P 17 De.17:18 On that a king must write a copy of Torah for himself
YES	**NO**		P 18 De.31:19 On that everyone should have access to the Torah
YES	**NO**		P 19 De. 8:10 On giving thanks (grace) to YHWH after meals (Christians pray before meals)

TEMPLE AND THE PRIESTS

		N/A	P 20 Ex. 25:8 On building a Sanctuary/(Tabernacle/Temple) for YHWH
YES			P 21 Le.19:30 On respecting the Sanctuary
YES			P 22 Nu. 18:4 On guarding the Sanctuary
		N/A	P 23 Nu.18:23 On Levitical services in the Tabernacle
		N/A	P 24 Ex.30:19 On Cohanim washing hands & feet before entering Temple
		N/A	P 25 Ex.27:21 On kindling the Menorah by the Cohanim
		N/A	P 26 Nu. 6:23 On the Cohanim blessing Israel
		N/A	P 27 Ex.25:30 On the Showbread before the Ark
		N/A	P 28 Ex. 30:7 On Burning the Incense on the Golden Altar twice daily
		N/A	P 29 Le. 6:6 On the perpetual fire on the Altar
		N/A	P 30 Le. 6:3 On removing the ashes from the Altar
		N/A	P 31 Nu. 5:2 On removing unclean persons from the camp
		N/A	P 32 Le. 21:8 On honoring the Cohanim
		N/A	P 33 Ex. 28:2 On the garments of the Cohanim
		N/A	P 34 Nu. 7:9 On Cohanim bearing the Ark on their shoulders
		N/A	P 35 Ex.30:31 On the holy anointing oil
		N/A	P 36 De.18:6-8 On the Cohanim ministering in rotation/watches
		N/A	P 37 Le.21:2-3 On the Cohanim being defiled for dead relatives
		N/A	P 38 Le.21:13 On that Cohen haGadol may only marry a virgin

SACRIFICES

		N/A	P 39 Nu.28:3 On the twice Daily Burnt, tamid, offerings
		N/A	P 40 Le.6:13 On Cohen haGadol`s twice daily meal offering
		N/A	P 41 Nu.28:9 On the Shabbat additional, musaf, offering
		N/A	P 42 Nu.28:11 On the New Moon, Rosh Chodesh, additional offering
		N/A	P 43 Le.23:36 On the Pesach additional offering
		N/A	P 44 Le.23:10 On the second day of Pesach meal offering of the Omer
		N/A	P 45 Nu.28:26-27 On the Shavuot additional, musaf, offering
YES	**NO**		P 46 Le.23:17 On the Two Loaves of bread Wave offering on Shavuot (OCM)
		N/A	P 47 Nu.29:1-2 On the Rosh HaShannah additional offering
		N/A	P 48 Nu.29:7-8 On the Yom Kippur additional offering
		N/A	P 49 Le.16 On the service of Yom Kippur, Avodah
		N/A	P 50 Nu.29:13 On the Sukkot, musaf, offerings
		N/A	P 51 Nu.29:36 On the Shemini Atzeret additional offering
		N/A	P 52 Ex.23:14 On the three annual Festival pilgrimages to the Temple
YES	**NO**		P 53 Ex.34:23; De. 16:16 On appearing before YHWH during the Festivals (OCM)

YES	**NO**		P 54 De.16:14 On rejoicing on the Festivals (OCM)
		N/A	P 55 Ex.12:6 On the 14th of Nisan slaughtering the Pesach lamb
YES	**NO**		P 56 Ex.12:8 On eating the roasted Pesach lamb night of Nisan 15
		N/A	P 57 Nu.9:11 On slaughtering the Pesach Sheini, Iyyar 14, offering
YES	**NO**		P 58 Nu.9:11; Ex. 12:8 On eating the Pesach Sheini lamb with Matzah and Maror (OCM)
		N/A	P 59 Nu.10:9-10 Trumpets for Feast sacrifices brought & for tribulation
		N/A	P 60 Le.22:27 On minimum age of cattle to be offered
		N/A	P 61 Le.22:21 On offering only unblemished sacrifices
		N/A	P 62 Le.2:13 On bringing salt with every offering
		N/A	P 63 Le.1:2 On the Burnt-Offering
		N/A	P 64 Le.6:18 On the Sin-Offering
		N/A	P 65 Le.7:1 On the Guilt-Offering
		N/A	P 66 Le.3:1 On the Peace-Offering
		N/A	P 67 Le.2:1; 6:7 On the Meal-Offering
		N/A	P 68 Le.4:13 On offerings for a Court (Sanhedrin) that has erred
		N/A	P 69 Le.4:27 Fixed Sin-Offering, by one unknowingly breaking a karet
		N/A	P 70 Le.5:17-18 Suspensive Guilt-Offering if doubt of breaking a karet
		N/A	P 71 Le.5:15; 19:20-21 Unconditional Guilt-Offering, for stealing, etc.
YES			P 72 Le.5:1-11 Offering higher or lower value, according to ones means
YES	**NO**		P 73 Nu.5:6-7 To confess one`s sins before YHWH and repent from them
		N/A	P 74 Le.15:13-15 On offering brought by a zav (man with a discharge)
		N/A	P 75 Le.15:28-29 Offering brought by a zavah (woman with a discharge)
		N/A	P 76 Le.12:6 On offering brought by a woman after childbirth
		N/A	P 77 Le.14:10 On offering brought by a leper after being cleansed
YES	**NO**		P 78 Le.27:32 On the Tithe of one`s cattle (some Christians pay tithes on all their increase)
		N/A	P 79 Ex.13:2 Sacrificing the First-born of clean (permitted) cattle
	NO		P 80 Ex.22:28; Nu. 18:15 On Redeeming the First-born of man, Pidyon ha-ben
		N/A	P 81 Ex.34:20 On Redeeming the firstling of an ass, if not...
		N/A	P 82 Ex.13:13 ...breaking the neck of the firstling of an ass
		N/A	P 83 De.12:5-6 On bringing due offerings to Jerusalem without delay
		N/A	P 84 De.12:14 All offerings must be brought only to the Sanctuary
		N/A	P 85 De.12:36 On offerings due from outside Israel to the Sanctuary
		N/A	P 86 De.12:15 On Redeeming blemished sanctified animal offerings
		N/A	P 87 Le.27:33 On the holiness of substituted animal offerings
		N/A	P 88 Le.6:9 On Cohanim eating the remainder of the Meal Offerings
		N/A	P 89 Ex.29:33 On Cohanim eating the meat of Sin and Guilt Offerings

		N/A	P 90 Le.7:19 Burn Consecrated Offerings that have become tameh/unclean
		N/A	P 91 Le.7:17 Burn remnant of Consecrated Offerings not eaten in time

VOWS

	NO		P 92 Nu.6:5 The Nazir letting his hair grow during his separation (MNA)
	NO		P 93 Nu.6:18 Nazir completing vow shaves his head & brings sacrifice (MNA)
YES			P 94 De.23:24 On that a man must honor his oral vows and oaths
YES			P 95 Nu.30:3 On that a judge can annul vows, only according to Torah

RITUAL PURITY

	NO		P 96 Le.11:8, 24 Defilement by touching certain animal carcasses, &...
	NO		P 97 Le.11:29-31 ...by touching carcasses of eight creeping creatures
	NO		P 98 Le.11:34 Defilement of food & drink, if contacting unclean thing
YES	**NO**		P 99 Le.15:19 On Tumah of a menstruant woman (MNA)
	NO		P100 Le.12:2 On Tumah of a woman after childbirth (MNA)
		N/A	P101 Le.13:3 On Tumah of a leper
		N/A	P102 Le.13:51 On garments contaminated by leprosy
		N/A	P103 Le.14:44 On a leprous house (N/A unless a leper in Israel)
	NO		P104 Le.15:2 On Tumah of a zav (man with a running issue) (MNA)
	NO		P105 Le.15:6 On Tumah of semen (MNA)
	NO		P106 Le.15:19 Tumah of a zavah (woman suffering from a running issue) (MNA)
	NO		P107 Nu.19:14 On Tumah of a human corpse
	NO		P108 Nu.19:13, 21 Law of the purification water of sprinkling, mei niddah (MNA)
YES	**NO**		P109 Le.15:16 On immersing in a mikveh to become ritually clean (the origin of baptism)
		N/A	P110 Le.14:2 On the specified procedure of cleansing from leprosy (N/A unless a leper)
		N/A	P111 Le.14:9 On that a leper must shave his head (N/A unless a leper)
		N/A	P112 Le.13:45 On that the leper must be made easily distinguishable (N/A unless a leper)
		N/A	P113 Nu.19:2-9 On Ashes of the Red Heifer, used in ritual purification

DONATIONS TO THE TEMPLE

		N/A	P114 Le.27:2-8 On the valuation for a person himself to the Temple
		N/A	P115 Le.27:11-12 On the valuation for an unclean beast to the Temple
		N/A	P116 Le.27:14 On the valuation of a house as a donation to the Temple
		N/A	P117 Le.27:16, 22-23 On the valuation of a field as a donation to the Temple
		N/A	P118 Le.5:16 If benefit from Temple property, restitution plus 1/5th
	NO		P119 Le.19:24 On the fruits of the trees fourth year`s growth (MNA)
	NO		P120 Le.19:9 On leaving the corners (Peah) of fields for the poor (MNA)
	NO		P121 Le.19:9 On leaving gleanings of the field for the poor (MNA)

	NO		P122 De.24:19 On leaving the forgotten sheaf for the poor (MNA)
	NO		P123 Le.19:19 On leaving the misformed grape clusters for the poor (MNA)
	NO		P124 Le.19:10 On leaving grape gleanings for the poor (MNA)
		N/A	P125 Ex.23:19 On separating & bringing First-fruits to the Sanctuary
		N/A	P126 De.18:4 To separate the great Heave-offering (terumah)
YES	**NO**		P127 Le.27:30; Nu. 18:24 To set aside the first tithe to the Levites (OCM)
		N/A	P128 De.14:22 To set aside the second tithe, eaten only in Jerusalem
		N/A	P129 Nu.18:26 On Levites` giving tenth of their tithe to the Cohanim
	NO		P130 De.14:28 To set aside the poor-man`s tithe in 3rd and 6th year
		N/A	P131 De.26:13 A declaration made when separating the various tithes
		N/A	P132 De.26:5 A declaration made bringing First-fruits to the Temple
		N/A	P133 Nu.15:20 On the first portion of the Challah given to the Cohen

THE SABBATICAL YEAR

	NO		P134 Ex.23:11 On ownerless produce of the Sabbatical year (shemittah) (MNA)
	NO		P135 Ex.34:21 On resting the land on the Sabbatical year (MNA)
	NO		P136 Le.25:10 On sanctifying the Jubilee (50th) year
	NO		P137 Le.25:9 Blow Shofar on Yom Kippur in the Jubilee & slaves freed
		N/A	P138 Le.25:24 Reversion of the land to ancestral owners in Jubilee yr
		N/A	P139 Le.25:24 On the redemption of a house within a year of the sale
YES	**NO**		P140 Le.25:8 Counting and announcing the years till the Jubilee year (OCM)
	NO		P141 De.15:3 All debts are annulled in the Sabbatical year, but...
YES			P142 De.15:3 ...one may exact a debt owed by a foreigner

CONCERNING ANIMALS FOR CONSUMPTION

		N/A	P143 De.18:3 The Cohen`s due in the slaughter of every clean animal
		N/A	P144 De.18:4 On the first of the fleece to be given to the Cohen
		N/A	P145 Le.27:21, 28 (Cherem vow) one devoted thing to YHWH, other to Cohanim
YES	**NO**		P146 Le.12:21 Slaughtering animals, according to Torah, before eating (OCM)
	NO		P147 Le.17:13 Covering with earth the blood of slain fowl and beast
	NO		P148 De.22:7 On setting free the parent bird when taking the nest
YES	**NO**		P149 Le.11:2 Searching for prescribed signs in beasts, for eating (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P150 De.14:11 Searching for the prescribed signs in birds, for eating (OCM)
	NO		P151 Le.11:21 Searching for prescribed signs in locusts, for eating (MNA)
YES	**NO**		P152 Le.11:9 Searching for the prescribed signs in fish, for eating (OCM)

FESTIVALS

		N/A	P153 Ex.12:2; De. 16:1 Sanhedrin to sanctify New Moon, & reckon yrs & seasons
YES	**NO**		P154 Ex.23:12 On resting on the Shabbat (OCM)

YES	**NO**		P155 Ex.20:8 On declaring Shabbat holy at its onset and termination (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P156 Ex.12:15 On removal of chametz, leaven(ed), on (Nisan 14) Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P157 Ex.13:8 Tell of Exodus from Egypt 1st night Pesach, (Nisan 15) (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P158 Ex.12:18 On eating Matzah the first night of Pesach, (Nisan 15) (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P159 Ex.12:16 On resting on the first day of Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P160 Ex.12:16 On resting on the seventh day of Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P161 Le.23:35 Count the Omer 49 days from day of first sheaf Nisan 16 (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P162 Le.23 On resting on Shavuot (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P163 Le.23:24 On resting on Rosh HaShannah (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P164 Le.16:29 On fasting on Yom Kippur (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P165 Le.16:29, 31 On resting on Yom Kippur (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P166 Le.23:35 On resting on the first day of Sukkot (OCM)
YES	**NO**		P167 Le.23:36 On resting on (the 8th day) Shemini Atzeret (OCM)
	NO		P168 Le.23:42 On dwelling in a Sukkah (booth) for seven days
	NO		P169 Le.23:40 On taking a Lulav (the four species) on Sukkot
YES	**NO**		P170 Nu.29:1 On hearing the sound of the Shofar on Rosh HaShannah (OCM)

COMMUNITY

		N/A	P171 Ex.30:12-13 On every male giving half a shekel annually to Temple
YES			P172 De.18:15 On heeding the Prophets
YES			P173 De.17:15 On appointing a king
YES			P174 De.17:11 On obeying the Court
YES			P175 Ex.23:2 Do not follow a majority to do evil. (Rabbinical: On in case of division, abiding by a majority decision.)
YES			P176 De.16:18 Appointing Judges & Officers of the Court in every town
YES			P177 Le.19:15 Treating litigants equally/impartially before the law
YES			P178 Le.5:1 Anyone aware of evidence must come to court to testify
YES			P179 De.13:15 The testimony of witnesses shall be examined thoroughly
YES			P180 De.19:19 On condemning witnesses who testify falsely
YES			P180 De.19:19 False witnesses punished, as they intended upon accused
		N/A	P181 De.21:4 On Eglah Arufah, on the heifer when murderer unknown
		N/A	P182 De.19:3 On establishing Six Cities of Refuge
		N/A	P183 Nu.35:2 Give cities to Levites - who`ve no ancestral land share
YES			P184 De.22:8 Build fence on roof, remove potential hazards from home

IDOLATRY

YES	**NO**		P185 De.12:2; 7:5 On destroying all idolatry and its appurtenances (OCM)
	NO		P186 De.13:17 The law about a city that has become apostate/perverted
		N/A	P187 De.20:17 On the law about destroying the seven Canaanite nations

	NO		P188 De.25:19 On the extinction of the seed of Amalek
	NO		P189 De.25:17 On remembering the nefarious deeds of Amalek to Israel

WAR

		N/A	P190 De.20:11-12 Regulations for wars other than ones commanded in Torah
		N/A	P191 De.20:2 Cohen for special duties in war; also men unfit return
		N/A	P192 De.23:14,15 Prepare place beyond the camp, so to keep sanitary &...
		N/A	P193 De.23:15 ...so include a digging tool among war implements

SOCIAL

YES			P194 Le.5:23 On a robber to restore the stolen article to its owner
YES			P195 De.15:8; Le. 25:35-36 On to give charity to the poor
		N/A	P196 De.15:14 On giving gifts to a Hebrew bondman upon his freedom
	NO		P197 Ex.22:24 On lending money to the poor without interest
	NO		P198 De.23:21 On lending money to the foreigner with interest
YES			P199 De.24:13; Ex. 22:25 On restoring a pledge to its owner if he needs it
YES			P200 De.24:15 On paying the worker his wages on time
YES			P201 De.23:25-26 Employee is allowed to eat the produce he`s working in
YES			P202 Ex.23:5 On helping unload when necessary a tired animal
YES			P203 De.22:4 On assisting a man loading his beast with its burden
YES			P204 De.22:1; Ex23:4 On that lost property must be returned to its owner
YES			P205 Le.19:17 On being required to reprove the sinner
YES			P206 Le.19:18 On love your neighbor as yourself
YES			P207 De.10:19 On being commanded to love the convert/proselyte
YES			P208 Le.19:36 On the law of accurate weights and measures

FAMILY

YES			P209 Le.19:32 On honoring the old (and wise)
YES			P210 Ex.20:12 On honoring parents
YES			P211 Le.19:3 On fearing parents
YES			P212 Ge.1:28 On to be fruitful and multiply
YES			P213 De.24:1 On the law of marriage
	NO		P214 De.24:5 On bridegroom devotes himself to his wife for one year
YES	**NO**		P215 Ge.17:10; Le. 12:3 On circumcising one`s son (not for Covenant but health reasons)
	NO		P216 De.25:5 If a man dies childless his brother marry widow, or... (MNA)
	NO		P217 De.25:9 On releasing her/the-widow (Chalitzah) (MNA)
	NO		P218 De.22:29 A violator must marry the virgin/maiden he has violated (MNA)
	NO		P219 De.22:18-19 The defamer of his bride is flogged & may never divorce
	NO		P220 Ex.22:15-23 On the seducer must be punished according to the law (MNA)

	NO		P221 De.21:11 Captive women treated according to special regulations
YES			P222 De.24:1 The law of divorce, only be means of written document
		N/A	P223 Nu.5:15-27 Suspected adulteress has to submit to the required test

JUDICIAL

	NO		P224 De.25:2 On whipping transgressors of certain commandments
		N/A	P225 Nu.35:25 On exile to city of refuge for unintentional homicide
	NO		P226 Ex.21:20 On beheading transgressors of certain commandments
	NO		P227 Ex.21:16 On strangling transgressors of certain commandments
	NO		P228 Le.20:14 On burning transgressors of certain commandments
	NO		P229 De.22:24 On stoning transgressors of certain commandments
	NO		P230 De.21:22 Hang after execution, violators of certain commandments
	NO		P231 De.21:23 On burial on the same day of execution

SLAVES

		N/A	P232 Ex.21:2 On the special laws for treating the Hebrew bondman
		N/A	P233 Ex.21:8 Hebrew bondmaid married to her master or his son, or...
		N/A	P234 Ex.21:8 ...allow the redemption to the Hebrew bondmaid
		N/A	P235 Le.25:46 On the laws for treating an alien bondman

TORTS

YES			P236 Ex.21:18 On the penalty for a person inflicting injury
YES			P237 Ex.21:28 On the law of injuries caused by an animal
YES			P238 Ex.21:33-34 On the law of injuries caused by an pit
	NO		P239 Ex.21:37; 22:3 On the law of punishment of thieves (MNA)
YES			P240 Ex.22:4 On the law of a judgment for damage caused by a beast
YES			P241 Ex.22:5 On the law of a judgment for damage caused by a fire
YES			P242 Ex.22:6-8 On the law of an unpaid guardian
YES			P243 Ex.22:9-12 On the law of a paid guardian
YES			P244 Ex.22:13 On the law of a borrower
YES			P245 Le.25:14 On the law of buying and selling
YES			P246 Ex.22:8 On the law of litigants
YES			P247 De.25:12 Save life of one pursued, even if need - kill oppressor
YES			P248 Nu.27:8 On the law of inheritance

The 365 Negative Mitzvot/Commandments

IDOLATRY AND RELATED PRACTICES

YES			N 1 Ex.20:3 Not believing in any other Elohim except the One YHWH.
YES	**NO**		N 2 Ex.20:4 Not to make images for the purpose of worship (Catholic/Orthodox tradition)
YES	**NO**		N 3 Le.19:4 Not to make an idol (even for others) to worship (Catholic/Orthodox tradition)

YES	**NO**		N 4 Ex.20:20 Not to make figures of human beings (Catholic/Orthodox tradition)
YES			N 5 Ex.20:5 Not to bow down to an idol
YES			N 6 Ex.20:5 Not to worship idols
YES			N 7 Le.18:21 Not to hand over any children to Moloch
YES			N 8 Le.19:31 Not to practice sorcery of the ov, necromancy
YES			N 9 Le.19:31 Not to practice sorcery of yidde`oni, familiar spirits
YES	**NO**		N 10 Le.19:4 Not to study idolatrous practices (OCM)
	NO		N 11 De.16:22 Not to erect a pillar which people assemble to honor
YES			N 12 Le.26:1 No carved stones to lay down to prostrate upon/towards
		N/A	N 13 De.16:21 Not to plant trees in the Sanctuary/Temple
YES			N 14 Ex.23:13 Swear not by an idol nor instigate an idolater to do so
YES	**NO**		N 15 Ex.23:13 Not to divert any non-Jew to idolatry (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 16 De.13:12 Not to try to persuade a Jew to worship idols (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 17 De.13:9 Not to love someone who seeks to mislead you to idols (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 18 De.13:9 Not to relax one`s aversion to the misleader to idols
	NO		N 19 De.13:9 Not to save the life of a misleader to idols
YES	**NO**		N 20 De.13:9 Not to plead for (defend) the misleader to idols (OCM)
YES			N 21 De.13:9 Not to oppress evidence unfavorable to the misleader
YES	**NO**		N 22 De.7:25 No benefit from ornaments which have adorned an idol (OCM)
	NO		N 23 De.13:17 Rebuild not a city destroyed as punishment for idolatry
	NO		N 24 De.13:18 Not deriving benefit from property of an apostate city
YES	**NO**		N 25 De.7:26 Do not use anything connected with idols or idolatry (OCM)
YES			N 26 De.18:20 Not prophesying in the name of idols
YES	**NO**		N 27 De.18:20 Not prophesying falsely in the Name of YHWH (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 28 De.13:3-4 Listen not to one who prophesies in the name of idols (OCM)
	NO		N 29 De.18:22 Not fearing or refraining from killing a false prophet
YES	**NO**		N 30 Le.20:23 Imitate not the ways nor practice customs of idolaters (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 31 Le.19:26; De.18:10 Not practicing divination (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 32 De.18:10 Not practicing soothsaying (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 33 De.18:10-11 Not practicing enchanting (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 34 De.18:10-11 Not practicing sorcery (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 35 De.18:10-11 Not practicing the art of the charmer (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 36 De.18:10-11 Not consulting a necromancer who uses the ov (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N 37 De.18:10-11 Not consulting a sorcerer who uses the ydo`a (OCM)
YES			N 38 De.18:10-11 Not to seek information from the dead, necromancy
YES			N 39 De.22:5 Women not to wear men`s clothes or adornments

YES			N 40 De.22:5 Men not wearing women`s clothes or adornments
YES			N 41 Le.19:28 Not tattoo yourself, as is the manner of the idolaters
YES	**NO**		N 42 De.22:11 Not wearing a mixture of wool and linen, Shatnes (OCM)
YES			N 43 Le.19:27 Not shaving temples/sides of head as part of worship to idols
YES			N 44 Le.19:27 Not shaving your beard as part of worship to idols
YES			N 45 De.16:1; 14:1; Le.19:28 Not making cuttings in your flesh over your dead

PROHIBITIONS RESULTING FROM HISTORICAL EVENTS

		N/A	N 46 De.17:16 Not returning to Egypt to dwell there permanently
YES	**NO**		N 47 Nu.15:39 Not to follow one`s heart or eyes, straying to impurity (OCM)
	NO		N 48 Ex.23:32; De.7:2 Not to make a pact with the Seven Canaanite Nations
		N/A	N 49 De.20:16 Not to spare the life of the Seven Canaanite Nations
YES	**NO**		N 50 De.7:2 Not to show mercy to idolaters (OCM)
YES			N 51 Ex.23:33 No one serving false gods to settle in Eretz-Israel
YES			N 52 De.7:3 Not to intermarry with one serving false gods
		N/A	N 53 De.23:4 Not to intermarry at all with a male from Ammon or Moav
YES			N 54 De.23:8 Exclude not marrying a descendant Esau if a proselyte
YES			N 55 De.23:8 Not to exclude marrying an Egyptian who is a proselyte
		N/A	N 56 De.23:7 Not permitted to make peace with Ammon and Moav nations
	NO		N 57 De.20:19 Not destroying fruit trees, even in time of war
YES			N 58 De.7:21 Not fearing the enemy in time of war
		N/A	N 59 De.25:19 Not forgetting the evil which Amalek did to us

BLASPHEMY

YES			N 60 Le.24:16; (rather): Ex. 22:27 Not blaspheming the Holy Name of YHWH
YES			N 61 Le.19:12 Not violating an oath by the Name of YHWH
YES	**NO**		N 62 Ex.20:7 Not take the Name of YHWH in vain (bring to nothing or change) (OCM)
YES			N 63 Le.22:32 Not profaning the Holy Name of YHWH
YES			N 64 De.6:16 Not testing/trying YHWH's promises & warnings
YES			N 65 De.12:4 Do not destroy houses of worship or holy books
YES			N 66 De.21:23 Leave not body of executed criminal hanging overnight

TEMPLE

		N/A	N 67 Nu.18:5 Be not lax in guarding the Sanctuary/(Temple)
		N/A	N 68 Le.16:2 Cohen haGadol enter Sanctuary only at prescribed times
		N/A	N 69 Le.21:23 Cohen with blemish enter not Temple, from Altar inwards
		N/A	N 70 Le.21:17 Cohen with a blemish not to minister in the Sanctuary
		N/A	N 71 Le.21:18 Cohen with temporary blemish minister not in Sanctuary
		N/A	N 72 Nu.18:3 Levites & Cohanim not to interchange in their functions

YES			N 73 Le.10:9-11 Drunk persons may not enter Sanctuary or teach Torah
		N/A	N 74 Nu.18:4 A Zar (non-Cohen) not to minister in Sanctuary
		N/A	N 75 Le.22:2 Tameh (unclean) Cohen not to minister in Sanctuary
		N/A	N 76 Le.21:6 Cohen who is tevul yom, not to minister in Sanctuary
		N/A	N 77 Nu.5:3 Tameh (unclean) person not to enter any part of Temple
		N/A	N 78 De.23:11 Tameh person enter not camp of Levites (Temple mount)
		N/A	N 79 Ex.20:25 Build not an Altar of stones which were touched by iron
		N/A	N 80 Ex.20:26 Not to have an ascent to the Altar by steps
		N/A	N 81 Le.6:6 Not to extinguish the Altar fire
		N/A	N 82 Ex.30:9 Offer nothing, but specified incense, on Golden Altar
YES			N 83 Ex.30:32 Not to make any oil the same as the Oil of Anointment
YES			N 84 Ex.30:32 Anoint none with special oil except Cohen Gadol & King
YES			N 85 Ex.30:37 Not to make incense same as burnt on Altar in Sanctuary
		N/A	N 86 Ex.25:15 Not to remove the staves from their rings in the Ark
		N/A	N 87 Ex.28:28 Not to remove the Breastplate from the Ephod
		N/A	N 88 Ex.28:32 Make not any incision in Cohen haGadol`s upper garment

SACRIFICES

		N/A	N 89 De.12:13 Offer not sacrifices outside Sanctuary/(Temple) Court
		N/A	N 90 Le.17:3-4 Slaughter not consecrated animals outside Temple Court
		N/A	N 91 Le.22:20 Dedicate not a blemished animal to be offered on Altar
		N/A	N 92 Le.22:22 Not to slaughter a blemished animal as a korban
		N/A	N 93 Le.22:24 Not to dash the blood of a blemished beast on the Altar
		N/A	N 94 Le.22:22 Not to burn the inner parts of blemished beast on Altar
		N/A	N 95 De.17:1 Not to sacrifice a beast with a temporary blemish
		N/A	N 96 Le.22:25 Not to offer a blemished sacrifice of a gentile
		N/A	N 97 Le.22:21 Not to cause a consecrated offering to become blemished
		N/A	N 98 Le.2:11 Not to offer leaven or honey upon the Altar
		N/A	N 99 Le.2:13 Not to offer a sacrifice without salt
		N/A	N100 De.23:19 Offer not on Altar: «hire of harlot» or «price of dog»
YES	**NO**		N101 Le.22:28 Not to slaughter an animal & its young on the same day (MNA)
		N/A	N102 Le.5:11 Not to put olive oil on the sin meal-offering
		N/A	N103 Le.5:11 Not to put frankincense on the sin meal-offering
		N/A	N104 Nu.5:15 Not to put olive oil on the jealousy offering, sotah
		N/A	N105 Nu.5:15 Not to put frankincense on the jealousy offering, sotah
		N/A	N106 Le.27:10 Not to substitute sacrifices
		N/A	N107 Le.27:26 Not to change sacrifices from one category to the other
		N/A	N108 Nu.18:17 Redeem not the firstborn of permitted (clean) animals

		N/A	N109 Le.27:33 Not to sell the tithe of the herd of cattle
		N/A	N110 Le.27:28 Not to sell a devoted (by the Cherem vow) field
		N/A	N111 Le.27:28 Not to redeem a devoted (by the Cherem vow) field
		N/A	N112 Le.5:8 Not to split head of bird slaughtered for Sin-offering
		N/A	N113 De.15:19 Not to do any work with a dedicated beast
		N/A	N114 De.15:19 Not to shear a dedicated beast
		N/A	N115 Ex.34:25 Slaughter not Pesach/Passover lamb if chametz is about
		N/A	N116 Ex.23:10 Leave not sacrificial portions of Pesach lamb overnight
		N/A	N117 Ex.12:10 Allow not meat of Pesach lamb to remain till morning
		N/A	N118 De.16:4 No meat of Nisan 14 Festive Offering remain till day 3
		N/A	N119 Nu.9:13 No meat of 2nd Pesach lamb Offering remain till morning
		N/A	N120 Le.22:30 No meat of Thanksgiving Offering to remain till morning
		N/A	N121 Ex.12:46 Not to break any bones of Pesach lamb offering
		N/A	N122 Nu.9:12 Not to break any bones of 2nd Pesach lamb offering
		N/A	N123 Ex.12:46 Not to remove Pesach offering from where it is eaten
		N/A	N124 Le.6:10 Not to bake the residue of a meal offering with leaven
		N/A	N125 Ex.12:9 Not to eat the Pesach offering boiled or raw
		N/A	N126 Ex.12:45 Not to allow an alien resident to eat Pesach offering
		N/A	N127 Ex.12:48 An uncircumcised person may not eat the Pesach offering
		N/A	N128 Ex.12:43 Not to allow an apostate to eat the Pesach offering
		N/A	N129 Le.12:4 Tameh (ritually unclean) person may not eat holy things
		N/A	N130 Le.7:19 Eat not meat of consecrated things that have become tameh
		N/A	N131 Le.19:6-8 Not to eat sacrificial meat beyond the allotted time
		N/A	N132 Le.7:18 Eat not sacrificial meat slaughtered in wrong intention
		N/A	N133 Le.22:10 A zar/non-Cohen may not eat terumah / (heave offering)
		N/A	N134 Le.22:10 A Cohen`s sojourner or hired worker may not eat terumah
		N/A	N135 Le.22:10 An uncircumcised person may not eat terumah
		N/A	N136 Le.22:4 Tameh (ritually unclean) Cohen may not eat terumah
		N/A	N137 Le.22:12 Bat-Cohen if married to non-Cohen not to eat holy food
		N/A	N138 Le.6:16 Not to eat the Meal-offering of a Cohen
		N/A	N139 Le.6:23 Eat not Sin-offering meat sacrificed within Sanctuary
		N/A	N140 De.14:3 Not to eat consecrated animals that have become blemished
		N/A	N141 De.12:17 Eat not unredeemed 2nd corn tithe outside Yerushalayim
		N/A	N142 De.12:17 Consume not unredeemed 2nd wine tithe outside Jerusalem
		N/A	N143 De.12:17 Consume not unredeemed 2nd oil tithe outside Jerusalem
		N/A	N144 De.12:17 Eat not an unblemished firstling outside Yerushalayim
		N/A	N145 De.12:17 Eat not sin or guilt offerings outside Sanctuary court

		N/A	N146 De.12:17 Not to eat the meat of the burnt offering at all
		N/A	N147 De.12:17 Eat not lesser sacrifices before blood dashed on Altar
		N/A	N148 De.12:17 A zar/non-Cohen is not to eat the most holy offerings
		N/A	N149 Ex.29:33 A Cohen not to eat First Fruits outside Temple courts
	NO		N150 De.26:14 Eat not unredeemed 2nd tithe while in state of impurity
	NO		N151 De.26:14 Not eating the 2nd tithe while in mourning
	NO		N152 De.26:14 On 2nd tithe redemption money (only for food and drink) (MNA)
YES	**NO**		N153 Le.22:15 Not eating un-tithed produce, tevel (Many Christian tithe on their increase)
	NO		N154 Ex.22:28 Not changing the order of separating the various tithes
YES			N155 De.23:22 Delay not payment of offerings, freewill or obligatory
		N/A	N156 Ex.23:15 Go not to Temple on pilgrim festivals without offering
YES			N157 Nu.30:3 Not to break your word, even if without an oath

PRIESTS

		N/A	N158 Le.21:7 A Cohen may not marry a harlot, zonah
		N/A	N159 Le.21:7 A Cohen marry not a woman profaned from the Priesthood
		N/A	N160 Le.21:7 A Cohen may not marry a divorcee
		N/A	N161 Le.21:14 Cohen haGadol may not marry a widow
		N/A	N162 Le.21:15 Cohen haGadol may not take a widow as a concubine
		N/A	N163 Le.10:6 Cohen with disheveled hair may not enter the Sanctuary
		N/A	N164 Le.10:6 Cohen wearing rent garments may not enter Sanctuary
		N/A	N165 le.10:7 Cohanim leave not Temple courtyard during the service
		N/A	N166 Le.21:1 Common Cohen must not be defiled for dead, except some
		N/A	N167 Le.21:11 Cohen haGadol may not be under one roof with dead body
		N/A	N168 Le.21:11 Cohen haGadol must not be defiled for any dead person
		N/A	N169 De.18:1 Levites have not part in the division of Israel`s land
		N/A	N170 De.18:1 Levites share not in the spoils of war
YES			N171 De.14:1 Not to tear out hair for the dead

DIETARY LAWS

YES	**NO**		N172 De.14:7 Not to eat any unclean animal (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N173 Le.11:11 Not to eat any unclean fish (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N174 Le.11:13 Not to eat any unclean fowl (OCM)
YES			N175 De.14:19 Not to eat any creeping winged insect
YES			N176 Le.11:41 Not to eat anything which creeps on the earth
YES			N177 Le.11:44 Not to eat creeping thing that breeds in decayed matter
YES			N178 Le.11:42 Not to eat living creatures that breed in seeds / fruit
YES	**NO**		N179 Le.11:43 Not to eat any detestable creature (OCM)

YES	**NO**		N180 De.14:21 Not to eat any animal which died naturally, a nevelah (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N181 Ex.22:30 Not to eat an animal which is torn or mauled, a treifah (OCM)
YES			N182 De.12:23 Not to eat any limb taken from a living animal
	NO		N183 Ge.32:33 Not to eat the sinew of the thigh-vein, gid ha-nasheh
YES			N184 Le.7:24 Not to eat blood
	NO		N185 Le.7:23 Not to eat certain types of fat of clean animal, chelev
YES			N186 Ex.23:19 Not to boil young male goat in its mother`s milk
YES			N187 Ex.34:26 Not to eat young male goat cooked in its mother`s milk
	NO		N188 Ex.21:28 Not to eat the flesh of a condemned & to be stoned ox (MNA)
	NO		N189 Le.23:14 Eat not bread made from grain of new crop, before Omer (MNA)
	NO		N190 Le.23:14 Eat not roasted grain of new crop, before Omer offering (MNA)
	NO		N191 Le.23:14 Eat not green ears of new crop, before Omer (Nisan 16) (MNA)
	NO		N192 Le.19:23 Not to eat orlah (MNA)
	NO		N193 De.22:9 Eat not growth of mixed vineyard planting, kilai hakerem
YES			N194 De.32:38 Not to use wine libations for idols, yayin nesach
YES			N195 Le.19:26; De.21:20 No eating or drinking to excess, gluttony & drunkenness
YES	**NO**		N196 Le.23:29 Not to eat anything on Yom Kippur / Day of Atonement (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N197 Ex.13:3 Not to eat chametz, leaven(ed), on Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N198 Ex.13:7 Not to eat an admixture of chametz/leaven(ed) on Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N199 De.16:3 Not to eat chametz, leaven(ed), after noon of 14 Nisan (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N200 Ex.13:7 No chametz may be seen in our homes during Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N201 Ex.12:19 Not to possess chametz, leaven(ed), during Pesach (OCM)

NAZIRITES

	NO		N202 Nu.6:3 A Nazir may not drink wine or any beverage from grapes
	NO		N203 Nu.6:3 A Nazir may not eat fresh grapes
	NO		N204 Nu.6:3 A Nazir may not eat dried grapes
	NO		N205 Nu.6:4 A Nazir may not eat grape seeds/kernels
	NO		N206 Nu.6:4 A Nazir may not eat grape peels/husks
	NO		N207 Nu.6:7 Nazir may not rend himself tameh (unclean) for the dead
	NO		N208 Le.21:11 Nazir must not become tameh entering house with corpse
	NO		N209 Nu.6:5 A Nazir must not shave his hair

AGRICULTURE

	NO		N210 Le.23:22 Reap not a whole field without leaving corners for poor (MNA)
	NO		N211 Le.19:9 Not to gather ears of grain that fell during harvesting (MNA)
	NO		N212 Le.19:10 Not to gather the misformed clusters of grapes (MNA)
	NO		N213 Le.19:10 Not to gather single fallen grapes during the vintage (MNA)

	NO		N214 De.24:19 Not to return for a forgotten sheaf (MNA)
	NO		N215 Le.19:19 Not to sow diverse kinds of seed in one field, kalayim (MNA)
	NO		N216 De.22:9 Not to sow grain or vegetables in a vineyard (MNA)
	NO		N217 Le.19:19 Not to crossbreed animals of different species (MNA)
	NO		N218 De.22:10 Work not with two different kinds of animals together (MNA)
	NO		N219 De.25:4 Muzzle not animal working field to prevent from eating (MNA)
	NO		N220 Le.25:4 Not to cultivate the soil in the 7th year, shemittah (MNA)
	NO		N221 Le.25:4 Not to prune the trees in the 7th year (MNA)
	NO		N222 Le.25:5 Reap not self-grown plant in 7th year as ordinary year (MNA)
	NO		N223 Le.25:5 Gather not self-grown fruit in 7th yr. as ordinary year (MNA)
	NO		N224 Le.25:11 Not to till the earth or prune trees in Jubilee year (MNA)
	NO		N225 Le.25:11 Reap not after growths of Jubilee year as ordinary year (MNA)
	NO		N226 Le.25:11 Not to gather fruit in Jubilee year as in ordinary year (MNA)
		N/A	N227 Le.25:23 Sell not one`s Eretz Yisrael land holdings permanently
		N/A	N228 Le.25:33 Not to sell/change the open lands of the Levites
YES			N229 De.12:19 Not to leave the Levites without support (Christians Support their Leaders)

LOANS, BUSINESS, AND THE TREATMENT OF SLAVES

		N/A	N230 De.15:2 Not to demand payment of debts after (7th) Shmitah year
		N/A	N231 De.15:9 Not to refuse loan to poor because Shmitah year is near
YES			N232 De.15:7 Not to deny charity to the poor
YES			N233 De.15:13 Not sending a Hebrew bondman away empty-handed
YES			N234 Ex.22:24 Not demanding payment from a debtor known unable to pay
		N/A	N235 Le.25:37 Not lending to another Jew at interest
		N/A	N236 De.23:20 Not borrowing from another Jew at interest
YES	**NO**		N237 Ex.22:24 Not participating in an agreement involving interest (OCM)
YES			N238 Le.19:13 Oppress not an employee by delaying paying his wages (MNA)
YES			N239 De.24:10 Not taking a pledge from a debtor by force
YES			N240 De.24:12 Not keeping a poor man`s pledge when he needs it (MNA)
YES			N241 De.24:17 Not taking any pledge from a widow
	NO		N242 De.24:6 Not taking ones business (or food) utensils in pledge
YES			N243 Ex.20:13 Not abducting an Israelite
YES			N244 Le.19:11 Not stealing
YES			N245 Le.19:13 Not robbing
YES			N246 De.19:14 Not fraudulently altering land boundaries / landmarker
YES			N247 Le.19:13 Not usurping our debts / do not defraud
YES			N248 Le.19:11 Not repudiating debts, denying receipt of loan/deposit

YES			N249 Le.19:11 Not to swear falsely regarding another man`s property
YES			N250 Le.25:14 Not wronging/deceiving one another in business
YES			N251 Le.25:17 Not wronging/misleading one another even verbally
YES			N252 Ex.22:20 Not harming the stranger among you verbally
YES			N253 Ex.22:20 Not injuring the stranger among you in business/trade
		N/A	N254 De.23:16 Not handing over a slave who`s fled to Israel
		N/A	N255 De.23:17 Take no advantage of a slave who`s fled to Israel
YES			N256 Ex.22:21 Not afflicting the orphans and widows
		N/A	N257 Le.25:39 Not employing a Hebrew bondman in degrading tasks
		N/A	N258 Le.25:42 Not selling a Hebrew bondman
		N/A	N259 Le.25:43 Not treating a Hebrew bondman cruelly
YES			N260 Le.25:53 Not allowing a heathen to mistreat a Hebrew bondman
		N/A	N261 Ex.21:8 Not selling a Hebrew maidservant. & if you marry her...
YES			N262 Ex.21:10 ...withhold not: food, raiment, or conjugal rights
YES	**NO**		N263 De.21:14 Not selling a captive woman (MNA)
YES	**NO**		N264 De.21:14 Not treating a captive woman as a slave (MNA)
YES			N265 Ex.20:17 Not coveting another man`s possessions/property, etc.
YES			N266 De.5:18 Covet not one`s possessions, even the desire forbidden
YES	**NO**		N267 De.23:26 A worker is not to cut down standing grain during work (MNA)
YES			N268 De.23:24 A hired laborer not to take more fruit than he can eat (MNA)
YES			N269 De.22:3 Not ignoring lost property to be returned to its owner
YES			N270 Ex.23:5 Refuse not to help man or animal collapsing with burden
YES			N271 Le.19:35 Not cheating/defrauding with measurements & weights
YES			N272 De.25:13 Not to possess false/inaccurate weights and measures

JUSTICE

	NO		N273 Le.19:15 A Judge is not to commit unrighteousness (MNA)
YES			N274 Ex.23:8 A Judge is not to accept bribes/gifts from litigants (MNA)
YES			N275 Le.19:15 A Judge is not to favor (be partial to) a litigant (MNA)
YES			N276 De.1:17 Judge not avoid justice being in fear of wicked person (MNA)
YES			N277 Le.19:15 (rather): Ex.23:3 A Judge not decide in favor of the poor, out of pity (MNA)
YES			N278 Ex.23:6 A Judge is not to discriminate against the wicked (MNA)
YES			N279 De.19:13 Judge not to pity one who killed or caused loss of limb (MNA)
YES			N280 De.24:17 A Judge not perverting justice due strangers or orphans (MNA)
	NO		N281 Ex.23:1 Judge not to hear one litigant in absence of the other (MNA)
	NO		N282 Ex.23:2 Do not answer a cause according to a majority to pervert justice. Rabbinical: Court may not convict by majority of 1 in capital case.
YES			N283 Ex.23:2 Do not answer a cause according to a majority to pervert justice. Rabbinical: Judge accept not colleague`s opinion, unless sure right (MNA)

	NO		N284 De.1:17 Not appointing an unlearned judge ignorant of the Torah (MNA)
YES			N285 Ex.20:16 Not bearing false witness
	NO		N286 Ex.23:1 A Judge is not to receive a wicked man`s testimony (MNA)
	NO		N287 De.24:16 A Judge receive not testimony from litigant`s relatives (MNA)
	NO		N288 De.19:15 Not convicting on the testimony of a single witness
YES			N289 Ex.20:13 Not murdering a human being
	NO		N290 Ex.23:7 No conviction based on circumstantial evidence alone (MNA)
YES			N291 Nu.35:30 A witness must not sit as a Judge in capital cases (MNA)
YES			N292 Nu.35:12 Not killing a murderer without trial and conviction (MNA)
	NO		N293 De.25:12 Not to pity a pursuer
YES			N294 De.22:26 Not punishing a person for a sin committed under duress
YES			N295 Nu.35:31 Not accepting ransom from an unwitting murderer (MNA)
YES			N296 Nu.35:32 Not accepting a ransom from a willful murderer (MNA)
YES			N297 Le.19:16 Hesitate not to save life of another person in danger
YES			N298 De.22:8 Not leaving obstacles on public or private domain
YES			N299 Le.19:14 Not misleading another by giving wrong advice
YES			N300 De.25:2-3 Inflict not more than assigned number lashes to guilty (MNA)
YES			N301 Le.19:16 Not to tell tales
YES			N302 Le.19:17 Not to bear hatred in your heart toward your brethren
YES			N303 Le.19:17 Not to put one another to shame
YES			N304 Le.19:18 Not to take vengeance on another
YES			N305 Le.19:18 Not to bear a grudge
YES	**NO**		N306 De.22:6 Not to take entire bird`s nest, mother and her young (OCM)
		N/A	N307 Le.13:33 Not to shave a leprous scall
		N/A	N308 De.24:8 Not to cut or cauterize (remove) other signs of leprosy
		N/A	N309 De.21:4 Not to make vow of innocence (leaders) on plowed land
	NO		N310 Ex.22:17 Not permitting a witch/sorcerer to live
	NO		N311 De.24:5 Take not bridegroom from home in first year of marriage
YES	**NO**		N312 De.17:11 Not to differ from or disobey the Cohanim and the Judge
YES	**NO**		N313 De.13:1 Not to add to the Mitzvot/commandments of Torah (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N314 De.13:1 Not to detract from the Mitzvot/commandments of Torah (OCM)
YES			N315 Ex.22:27 Not to curse a judge
YES			N316 Ex.22:27 Not to curse a ruler
YES			N317 Le.19:14 Not to curse any Jew
YES			N318 Ex.21:17 Not cursing parents
YES			N319 Ex.21:15 Not to strike parents
YES	**NO**		N320 Ex.20:10 Not to work on Shabbat

	NO		N321 Ex.16:29 Not to walk beyond permitted limits, eruv, on Shabbat
YES	**NO**		N322 Ex.35:3 Not to inflict punishment on the Shabbat (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N323 Ex.12:16 Not to work on the first day of Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N324 Ex.12:16 Not to work on the seventh day of Pesach (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N325 Le.23:21 Not to work on Shavuot (Observed by Christian minority - OCM)
YES	**NO**		N326 Le.23:25 Not to work on Rosh HaShannah (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N327 Le.23:35 Not to work on the first day of Sukkot (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N328 Le.23:36 Work not 8th-day/Shemini-Atzeret, (after Hoshana Rabba) (OCM)
YES	**NO**		N329 Le.23:28 Not to work on Yom Kippur / the Day of Atonement (OCM)

INCEST AND OTHER FORBIDDEN RELATIONSHIPS

YES			N330 Le.18:7 No relations with one`s mother
YES			N331 Le.18:8 No relations with one`s father`s wife
YES			N332 Le.18:9 No relations with one`s sister
YES			N333 Le.18:11 No relations with step-sister
YES			N334 Le.18:10 No relations with one`s son`s daughter
YES			N335 Le.18:10 No relations with one`s daughter`s daughter
YES			N336 Le.18:10 No relations with one`s daughter
YES			N337 Le.18:17 No relations with a woman and her daughter
YES			N338 Le.18:17 No relations with a woman and her son`s daughter
YES			N339 Le.18:17 No relations with a woman & her daughter`s daughter
YES			N340 Le.18:12 No relations with one`s father`s sister
YES			N341 Le.18:13 No relations with one`s mother`s sister
YES			N342 Le.18:14 No relations with wife of father`s brother
YES			N343 Le.18:15 No relations with one`s son`s wife
YES			N344 Le.18:16 No relations with brother`s wife
YES			N345 Le.18:18 No relations with sister of wife, during wife`s life
YES			N346 Le.18:19 No relations with a menstruant
YES			N347 Le.18:20 No relations with another man`s wife
YES			N348 Le.18:23 Men may not lie with beasts
YES			N349 Le.18:23 Women may not lie with beasts
YES			N350 Le.18:22 A man may not lie carnally with another man
YES			N351 Le.18:7 A man may not lie carnally with his father
YES			N352 Le.18:14 A man may not lie carnally with his father`s brother
YES			N353 Le.18:6 Not to be intimate with a kinswoman
	NO		N354 De.23:3 A mamzer (born out of wedlock) may not have relations with a Jewess (MNA)
YES			N355 De.23:18 No relations (harlotry) with a woman outside marriage

YES	**NO**		N356 De.24:4 Remarry not your divorced wife after she has remarried (OCM)
		N/A	N357 De.25:5 Childless widow marry none except late husbands brother
	NO		N358 De.22:29 Divorce not wife, that he has to marry after raping her
	NO		N359 De.22:19 Divorce not wife, after falsely slandering her
	NO		N360 De.23:2 Man unable of procreation (eunuch) not to marry Jewess
YES	**NO**		N361 Le.22:24 Not to castrate a man or beast

THE MONARCHY

YES		N/A	N362 De.17:15 Not appointing a king who is not of the seed of Israel (Y'shua is King!)
		N/A	N363 De.17:16 A king not to accumulate an excess number of horses
		N/A	N364 De.17:17 A king not multiplying wives
		N/A	N365 De.17:17 A king not amassing great personal wealth

Humanism – Relativism – Materialism

"Elohim saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth" Genesis 6:5

Man has been very impressed with himself and his own accomplishments since the dawn of time, to the point of man worship as the measure of all things. Believing himself to be in control, the carnal man employs humanism, relativism and materialism to convince himself that he is his own god.

Today, however, the earthlings are racing towards perilous times because of a growing concern about environmental sustainability, global warming, chemtrails, world poverty and hunger, global destruction, war, deadly pharmaceutical drugs, depleted uranium, "Crapitalism," the insatiable greed of the "Bilderberg power mongers," polluted air, water and food, along with all forms of toxic immorality and injustice – pure products of humanism fueled by an insatiable desire for instant gratification. Hardly anyone seems to be aware of the fact (or cares) that these things have been predicted within the writings of the Renewed Covenant which contains many prophetic declarations against those who are destroying the earth: *"And the nations were angry; and your anger is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged: and that You should give a reward to your servants, the prophets, and the Set Apart believers, and to them that Fear Your Name, the small and the great; and that You should destroy them who destroyed the earth"* (Revelation 11:18).

Individual stewardship of the material world is a major component of man's inherent responsibility by which he is being judged and yet the vast majority of religious people continue to make significant contributions to the Humanist, Relativist Materialist (HRM) agendas. It's their "right" after all and so, many (if not most) mock and scorn the very idea that YHWH will require us to give an account for the life we've lived. The wickedness of man is great in the earth yet mankind resents absolute demands upon his "rights and freedoms" and prefers to escalate his transgression.

The "sciences" and modern philosophies of life have attempted to reverse the criterion of Justice, Faith and Judgment, so it is up to each individual to choose and decide who will win. Will rebellious men who hold the value of human life in contempt win and destroy everything, or will YHWH do battle against all the forces of evil and finally wipe them off the face of the Earth? Is it a reasonable conclusion to think that YHWH would create all life and the purpose of life, only to then watch it all go up in a nuclear mushroom cloud?
Evil cannot triumph over good because it is constrained by time and space; the domain of

humanism, relativism and materialism is temporary and finite. Peter put it this way, *"Because all flesh is as grass and all its beauty like the flower of the field. The grass dries up and the flower withers away; but the Word of our Elohim abides forever: and this is the Word that is announced to you"* (1 Peter 1:24, 25).

Immerser

A common misconception among many Christians is that "baptism" was invented by "John the Baptist," but of course Jews have been "purifying" themselves with a ritual immersion in water for over 3200 years and at least 1300 years before Y'shua came to Earth as Mashiyach. The synagogue system that arose after the Captivity but before +/- 150 BCE had as one of its key architectural aspects a ritual bath called a *"**mikveh**,"* through which the faithful passed prior to entering the service. ***Mikveh*** is first mentioned in Genesis: *"And Elohim called the dry land Earth; and the **mikveh** (gathering together) of the waters called he Seas: and Elohim saw that it was good."* (Genesis 1:10). "*Nevertheless a fountain or pit, wherein there is **mikveh** (plenty of water), shall be clean: but that which touches their carcass shall be unclean"* (Leviticus 11:36).

Literally hundreds of *mikveh* baths (baptismals) have been uncovered at the foot of the entrance to the Temple in Jerusalem. Before entering the Temple every soul was required to purify themselves by putting off the old man and turning their hearts toward praise and worship of YHWH. Torah requires that all males come up to Jerusalem at least three times a year to keep the Annual Feasts or Set Times of YHWH and, of course, at this time each one would enter into a *mikveh* before entering the Temple. Y'shua and many of his disciples went into the Temple daily to pray (Matt. 26:55; Mark 14:49; Luke 19:47; 22:53; Acts 2:46; 3:2; 5:42); they would partake of a *mikveh* to separate themselves unto YHWH and to make a distinction between coming out from the mundane and into that which is Set Apart unto YHWH. Today, observant Jews enjoy a *mikveh* before Shabbat and at other special times to cleanse the inside; the *mikveh* actually has nothing to do with washing the outside of the body. Everyone takes a shower before entering a *mikveh*; but in ancient times, of course, there were not such luxuries.

The *mikveh* (baptism) was and is a vital part of the requirement for new converts to enter the Faith. Peter makes the point: "*You are also **saved** in that very manner by immersion, not merely by **washing** the filth from your body, but by confessing Elohim with a clean conscience and by the **resurrection** of Y'shua the Mashiyach*" (1 Peter 3:20-21). Mashiyach's name is derived from a word that means to "save," however another word for "save" is ***khaya***, a slightly different inflection that also means "life." There is a direct wordplay between ***khaya*** (save/life) and ***kaya*** (clean). There is also another similar sounding word which means "resurrection" – ***Khaya*** (save): ***Khaya*** (life): ***Khayat*** (resurrection - Romans 7:9): ***Kaya*** (clean). Another bit of cleverness has to do with the word for "resurrection" as used in this passage. The more commonly used Aramaic word is ***nukhama***, such as when Y'shua declared at Lazarus' tomb that he is the "***resurrection and the life.***" However, in this case the word is ***qayamta***, the middle word is ***yam*** (sea); it was at *Yam Suph* that Moses, who was "resurrected or saved" from water at infancy, was also "resurrected or saved" by the parting of the waters along with the entire nation of Israel.

Immersion is not a one time "quick fix" solution, as Yochanan indicates: *"And when (he) saw the many from the Pharisees and Sadducees that came to be immersed, he said to them, 'Generation of vipers! Who has informed you to flee from the wrath that will come?'"* (Matthew 3:7) Certainly, it is very easy to be immersed by a famous prophet and use the immersion as some sort of credential of authentic conversion; however, Yochanan would not permit this. Those who were not made ready in their Spirit could not be immersed until they surrendered their lives according to the Kingdom of Elohim.
Immersion is as a Set Apart procedural directive, and responsibility lies with those who conduct

and witness the immersion to follow the instructions that Torah and Mashiyach set forth. Rav Shaul was also very careful about who he immersed because of this status in the community: *"I thank my Elohim that I immersed none of you, except Crispus and Gaius; And therefore that not any one should say that I immersed in my own name"* (1 Corinthians 1:14, 15). Rav Shaul exposed counterfeit immersions to illustrate the validity of the resurrection: *"Otherwise, what shall they do who are immersed for the dead, if the dead do not rise? Why are they immersed for the dead?"* (1 Corinthians 15:29) It is foolish for someone to be immersed on behalf of a dead person because it is the voluntary will of each living soul to live for YHWH and His Mashiyach according to His Word. It is also foolish and despicable to pay monies to a Priest or any "religious" leader to pray for the dead or to make some sort of intercession for the dead, because each person's choice during their lives cannot be invalidated by the will of others after they are dead. We have one life to live and one opportunity to make our choices count. Immersion is a voluntary act of obedience and a witness to others of our willingness to live for Mashiyach and our desire to turn from the fallen world of haSatan and enter into the Kingdom of Elohim.

"Alive in the waters" (1 Peter 3:20) points to the waters of the Mikveh, the complete immersion (baptism) into living waters after a soul has repented of his sin and agreed to walk in the newness of life (the Kingdom) as offered by Mashiyach. *"For those who have been immersed in Mashiyach have been clothed with Mashiyach"* (Galatians 3:27). Being clothed with Mashiyach means to have the Spirit of Mashiyach within and live as Mashiyach and his disciples lived. *"I will greatly rejoice in YHWH, my soul shall be joyful in my Elohim; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels"* (Isaiah 61:10). When Y'shua's talmidim were providing immersion (mikveh) for Jewish souls, the new converts were not demonstrating an act of conversion from one religion to another, but were entering into Mashiyach for redemption and purification from sin. Immersion is only one of many outward symbols for those who desire to be "*clothed with Mashiyach,*" but immersion in itself without the intent of the heart means nothing; the heart must first be humble and contrite and have turned from all sin to YHWH and His Mashiyach. Before going into a mikveh (baptism), everyone must count the cost and be prepared to live for Mashiyach when he or she comes out.

The event of "Philip and the eunuch" is also notable: *"And he arose and went and met a certain believer who had come from Cush"* (Acts 8:27). The Aramaic word "***MHYMNA***" can mean either "believer" or "eunuch." Greek versions mistranslate this as "eunuch" instead of the more contextually correct "believer." Eunuchs were disqualified from entering the Temple in Jerusalem but obviously this was a righteous man who was reading the Prophet Isaiah and wanting to learn more. Pileepos (Philip) taught him about Mashiyach Y'shua and about immersion into the Kingdom of Elohim in Y'shua. However, both ancient Greek and Aramaic texts do not contain this verse that was inserted in later Greek texts: *"And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"* (Acts 8:37 KJV). This added verse bolsters the ideology of "belief" for conversion, but in this case the man was already a "believer" who had yet to put his trust in YHWH's Mashiyach for atonement. Someone who is not already a believer in YHWH must turn from sin, begin to have Torah written upon the heart (keep YHWH's Commandments) and co-labor with Mashiyach to purify himself and produce the fruits of righteousness. Those who follow Mashiyach are to put on garments of righteousness as Y'shua himself also wears see Rev 3:4-6; 16:15; Isaiah 61:10.

Today, there is no doubt that baptism is viewed as an act of conversion. It indicates a very clear demarcation of the time and place when a person is buried in the waters of a mikveh and resurrected in living waters unto Mashiyach. Immersion is a most beautiful and joyous occasion for all believers; it is a powerful act of Faith and yet it is only a beginning because each one of us lives and grows from faith to faith: *"For in it is revealed the righteousness of Elohim, from faith to faith; as it is written, The righteous by faith, shall live"* (Romans 1:17). Many

Christians rededicate their lives to YHWH and are re-baptized as they grow from "faith to faith" in a wonderful progressive development. Nevertheless all who follow Mashiyach also enter into many aspects of his sufferings. Mashiyach endured great temptations after his mikveh, and everyone who follows Mashiyach must also endure their own temptation in a similar manner, but we will not be tried beyond what we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13). Wherefore, let him who thinks he stands beware or else he may fall.

Mashiyach instructs his followers: *"Go therefore make disciples of all nations, and immerse them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Ruach haKodesh"* (Matthew 28:19). Note that Aramaic uses "name" – singular – which does not support the traditional trinity theology. Ruach haKodesh is a title for YHWH (see Isaiah 63:1-11; Psalm 51:1-11); the Son has his Father's Name within him and the Father keeps His people in His Name (John 17:11). All converts to Y'shua were baptized in the Name of YHWH. This is the central focus: the Name of Y'shua (YHWH is Salvation) reveals the Name of YHWH as our Salvation and *"there is not another name under heaven which is given to men by which it is proper to have life!"* (Acts 4:12)

Once we are immersed into YHWH our Salvation (Y'shua) then the *"righteous by faith, shall live"* which means living righteous lives and having Torah written upon the heart. As we live *from faith to faith* we recognize the development of the spiritual man within us and each Shabbat and Feast day of YHWH we enter in literally to the days of Mashiyach; these are prophetic days within our own generation and our own lives. The physical immersion in water is the first step toward drawing close to YHWH after repentance is made; it is also the first step towards the excitement and joy of living in Mashiyach.

Jealous Elohim

"For you shall worship no other elohim: for YHWH,
whose name is Jealous, is a jealous Elohim" Sh'mot/Exodus 34:14

There are two types of jealousy revealed in Scripture: *Qannaw* or *qannow* which is the righteous jealousy of YHWH; and *qinah*, which is the jealousy common to the fallen world, based on lust, pride, envy, hate, and insecurity, etc.

YHWH is jealous of His people and vice-versa. When we desire the same things that YHWH desires it's because YHWH has put His Spirit within and made us into a Kedoshim, or Set Apart people, whether Jew or Gentile (D'varim/Deut. 7:6, 14:2, 21; Yeshayahu 62:10-12; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Keefa 2:9; 2 Keefa 3:11). If we are jealous for what is righteous, then we also must hate evil and all transgressions against Torah, which goes contrary to our spirit. YHWH's jealousy over His people clearly depicts His desire for an intimate relationship with each soul. He most certainly cannot be thought of as a passive Father who desires agnostic attitudes towards Him when in fact He is *"a jealous Elohim."*

YHWH is One and His Name is One. He is exclusive and does not permit His divine glory to be shared by false authorities. As the architect of Life, there is no other Creator to be compared to YHWH; therefore, *"You shall not make any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: You shall not bow down to them, nor serve them: for I YHWH your Elohim am a jealous Elohim"* (Sh'mot/Ex. 20:4, 5).

Being jealous of our Creator YHWH also means being jealous to live according to the Way of YHWH and His Mashiyach. Our lifestyles clearly reveal whether or not we are in a relationship with YHWH and His Mashiyach. Paul wrote, *"You cannot drink the cup of our Master and the cup of demons; and you cannot be partakers at the table of our Master, and at the table of demons. Or, would we provoke our Master's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?"* (1 Corinthians 10:21, 22) Whenever we provoke YHWH to jealousy, we are asking for disciplinary measures. Unfortunately, many religious people feel they have the upper hand and presume to tell YHWH

how to run the universe. Rather than being jealous of YHWH's Ways, they've fashioned their own gods according to religious traditions, something which Y'shua our Mashiyach frequently railed against (Matthew 15:1-9, 23:13-33; Mark 7:1-23, Luke 11:37-44).

YHWH is jealous for His Name's sake. He guards all that is Righteous according to His Word; in some cases He even leads rebellious souls into greater rebellion to make a clear demarcation between the righteous and the wicked. *"Therefore Elohim will send upon them the strength of a deception that they may believe a lie; and that they all may be condemned who believe not the truth but have pleasure in iniquity"* (2 Thess. 2:11, 12).

Since YHWH's love for His creation is constant according to His Righteous Judgments, why then should anyone question whether YHWH loves them? Why would YHWH create life unless He delighted in it for His good pleasure? Everything YHWH Creates is part of His plan and purpose. *"But, as it is written: The eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, that which Elohim has prepared for those who love him"* (1 Corinthians 2:9-14).

When mankind is jealous of his Creator he becomes "divinely inspired" in Mashiyach's government and in the ***Olam Haba*** (the world to come). Everything in the natural world has repercussions in the spiritual world. *"Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy"* (B'midbar/Num. 25:11). In the same manner that YHWH is jealous for His people, we His people are jealous of Him, and thus refrain from entertaining false deities or religions that are in opposition to Him.

Rav Shaul echoed the same jealousy for YHWH that Phinehas displayed when he wrote; *"For I am jealous over you, with a righteous jealousy: for I have espoused you to a husband as a chaste virgin whom I would present to the Mashiyach. But I fear, or else, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his craftiness, so your minds should be corrupted from simplicity towards the Mashiyach. For if he that comes to you, had proclaimed to you another Y'shua, whom we have not proclaimed; or if you had received another Spirit, which you have not received; or another gospel, which you have not accepted; you might well have given your permission..."* (2 Corinthians 11:2-5).

The idea that many opposing religions all lead to the Kingdom of Elohim is a fallacy! Mashiyach taught: *"Enter by the straight door, for wide is the door and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many are they, those that go in it. How narrow the door and straight the road that leads to life, and few are they, those that find it. Beware of false prophets that come among you in the clothing of lambs, but from within are ravenous wolves"* (Matthew 7:13-15).

The Renewed Covenant Scriptures clearly reveal that Y'shua and his followers were Torah observant and entrusted with YHWH's Commandments. As a result, Mashiyach was jealous for that which belongs to his Father YHWH, and his lifestyle demonstrated a continuum of Covenant that extends from everlasting to everlasting (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 4:8, 13:8). Jeremiah wrote, *"Thus says YHWH, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the ancient paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein"* (Jeremiah 6:16). Y'shua taught: *"Bear my yoke upon you and learn from me. That I am tranquil and I am meek, and in my heart you will find tranquility in your souls. For my yoke is pleasant and my burden is light"* (Matthew 11:29, 30). Y'shua is the Ancient Path that originated when Adam and Eve were redeemed from sin.

All counterfeit religion is exposed through belief upon Y'shua Mashiyach and Torah observance. *"And Y'shua said to those Yehudeans who believed in him, If you should abide by my words, truly you are my disciples. And you will know the truth and that truth will set you free. They said to him, "We are the seed of Awraham and never has bondage to anyone been served by us. How do you say that you will be free men?" Y'shua said to them, Amen, amen I say to you that anyone who commits sin is the servant of sin. And a servant does not remain forever in the house, but the Son remains*

forever. If therefore the Son should free you, truly you will be free men" (Yochanan 8:20-25).

Josephus the Netzari

"So the Word of Elohim spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of kohenim became obedient to the faith." Acts 6:7

Throughout the Gospels, we are told of prominent members of the Jewish aristocracy, particularly from the Sanhedrin Council, who were "secret followers" of Y'shua Mashiyach (John 12:42, 19:38). Two men who are directly mentioned by name are Joseph of Ramtha and Nicodemus, but there can be little doubt that there were many others. Here we will examine the possibility of another such man, descended by his own account from both priests and kings. His name was Yoseph bar Matthias, better known as the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius.

In the two millennia since his death, the writings of Josephus have become one of the foremost focal points in the Jewish Christian divide and debate. His works are among the only surviving sources for documenting the trials and tribulations of First Century Israel. While some would add Philo of Alexandria to this short list as well (although he visited Israel just once), Josephus was a long-time resident who was an eyewitness to events like the Jewish War and the destruction of the Second Temple, which makes Josephus an even more critical witness than his Alexandrian counterpart and literally puts him in a category all by himself.

Josephus also emerges as a huge enigma when we consider how different groups have portrayed him over the centuries. In Rabbinic circles, he is largely looked upon as a traitor, because by Josephus' own account, he had surrendered to the Romans after commanding Galilean forces in the Jewish War. He then "switched sides" interpreting for the Romans the Hebrew laments of his brothers while living the last quarter century of his life in Gentile splendor. The fact that Josephus gives approval to Y'shua and his early followers surely did not help curry favor with his brethren. In addition, Josephus the Pharisee provides a fair amount of negative appraisals of the key tenets of that sect, and it is from the Pharisees that we get the Rabbinics of today.

On the other hand, Josephus' account of the Second Temple's destruction and other key aspects of Jewish history have never been successfully refuted by the Rabbinics either, so like it or not, they admit Josephus is generally reliable. The modern state of Israel in fact uses the story of Masada as a major symbol of their national identity, and this is in spite of the fact that Josephus is the sole source for this event. Generally speaking, the grudgingly difficult but rock solid consensus is that Josephus is overall considered one of the greatest and most accurate historians the world has ever known. So while many Rabbinics accuse Josephus of abandoning them, they have not altogether abandoned Josephus.

But if the Rabbinic response to Josephus appears to be confusing, the Christian version of this could well be considered downright schizophrenic as Christians have actually attempted to add to his writing for credibility. And, while accepting as a normative fact Josephus' love of Torah and status as a Pharisaic leader, they have also suggested that his positive portrayals of the early Nazarenes pointed to the historian as an early Bishop of Jerusalem! All these centuries later, we may well look at such an idea as Christian fable, but the fact remains that even many of the most fantastic legends have some basis in real history. But the question is: What are the facts behind this theory? Is it possible that Josephus was an early follower of Y'shua, and that this formed the basis of Christian legend about him? If so, can we demonstrate from the historical record how Josephus' genuine beliefs may have been morphed for their purposes? At the end of the day, can we say with any certainty that the most famous Jewish historian of them all was really a Nazarene Jew? In order to find out, we will need to answer a series of progressively interesting and difficult questions, starting with the easiest one first:

Josephus' love for Torah

Josephus writes[57]:

> For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, [as the Greeks have,] but only ***twenty-two books, (8) which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine;*** and of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; but as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to Elohim, and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, ***no one has been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews immediately, and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain Divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be willingly to die for them.***[58] (Against Apion, 1.8)

Josephus and Pharisaism

The historian clearly identifies himself as a Pharisee, having taken up affiliation with that sect when he was nineteen years old. However, Josephus also goes out of his way to express the strong points of other forms of Judaism as well[59]**:**

> I was commended by all for the love I had to learning; on which account the high priests and principal men of the city came then frequently to me together, in order to know my opinion about the accurate understanding of points of the law. And when I was about sixteen years old, I had a mind to make trim of the several sects that were among us. These sects are three: - ***The first is that of the Pharisees, the second that Sadducees, and the third that of the Essens, as we have frequently told you; for I thought that by this means I might choose the best, if I were once acquainted with them all; so I contented myself with hard fare, and underwent great difficulties, and went through them all. Nor did I content myself with these trials only; but when***

57 All quotes from Josephus are derived from the William Whiston translation. Elsewhere, though, common names for Father YHWH and His Son Y'shua have been replaced with the originals as enshrined in Scripture. In other cases, where archaic KJV-style English terminology seems to create confusion, a more modern syntax is preferred.

58 It is possible to argue that, since Josephus says not to add or take away from the Tanakh, this might exclude the Renewed Covenant writings. However, the real meaning is that no one is to add or subtract from the content of the Tanakh books themselves. The Renewed Covenant then, owing to the fact that it is a contingency of what went before, is not so much adding to Tanakh as it is showing how Tanakh themes developed into the time of Y'shua. Also, as a Pharisee, Josephus knows full well that their traditions are much more likely candidates for "adding" to Tanakh than the Renewed Covenant is!

59 Quoted from *Against Apion*, 2.42: "As to the laws themselves, more words are unnecessary, for they are visible in their own nature, and appear to teach not impiety, but the truest piety in the world. They do not make men hate one another, but encourage people to communicate what they have to one another freely; they are enemies to injustice, they take care of righteousness, they banish idleness and expensive living, and instruct men to be content with what they have, and to be laborious in their calling; they forbid men to make war from a desire of getting more, but make men courageous in defending the laws; they are inexorable in punishing malefactors; they admit no sophistry of words, but are always established by actions themselves, which actions we ever propose as surer demonstrations than what is contained in writing only: on which account I am so bold as to say that we are become the teachers of other men, in the greatest number of things, and those of the most excellent nature only; for what is more excellent than inviolable piety? what is more just than submission to laws? and what is more advantageous than mutual love and concord? and this so far that we are to be neither divided by calamities, nor to become injurious and seditious in prosperity; but to contemn death when we are in war, and in peace to apply ourselves to our mechanical occupations, or to our tillage of the ground; while we in all things and all ways are satisfied that Elohim is the inspector and governor of our actions."

> ***I was informed that one, whose name was Banus, lived in the desert, and used no other clothing than grew upon trees, and had no other food than what grew of its own accord, and bathed himself in cold water frequently, both by night and by day, in order to preserve his chastity, I imitated him in those things, and continued with him three years. (3) So when I had accomplished my desires, I returned back to the city, being now nineteen years old, and began to conduct myself according to the rules of the sect of the Pharisees, which is of kin to the sect of the Stoics, as the Greeks call them.*** (Life, 1.2)

Josephus and "the Oral Law"

It is clear that Josephus calls both customs and written Torah requirements as "law" or nomos. However, the broad contours of Josephus' assessment of good and bad Oral Law are still very evident:

> Now, for the Pharisees, they live meanly, and despise delicacies in diet; and they follow the conduct of reason; and what that prescribes to them as good for them they do; and they think they ought earnestly to strive to observe reason's dictates for practice. They also pay a respect to such as are in years; nor are they so bold as to contradict them in any thing which they have introduced; and when they determine that all things are done by fate, they do not take away the freedom from men of acting as they think fit; since their notion is, that it hath pleased Elohim to make a temperament, whereby what he wills is done, but so that the will of man can act virtuously or viciously. They also believe that souls have an immortal rigor in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again; on account of which doctrines they are able greatly to persuade the body of the people; and whatsoever they do about Divine worship, prayers, and sacrifices, they perform them according to their direction; insomuch that the cities give great attestations to them on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also.
>
> But the doctrine of the Sadducees is this: That souls die with the bodies***; nor do they regard the observation of any thing besides what the law enjoins them***; for they think it an instance of virtue to dispute with those teachers of philosophy whom they frequent: but this doctrine is received but by a few, yet by those still of the greatest dignity. But they are able to do almost nothing of themselves; for when they become magistrates, as they are unwillingly and by force sometimes obliged to be, they addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees, because the multitude would not otherwise bear them. (Antiquities, 18:1.3-4)

Notice here that the Sadducees "addict" themselves to some Oral Laws of the Pharisees—not exactly a pleasant image. Surely then there would be no "addiction" to Torah in the mind of Josephus, so this is a very clear conceptual separation. A further rebuke of the Sadducees is in Antiquities 20.9.1 which we will visit later.

> ***He was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews…***

On the other hand, we also see above that when it came to ministrations at the Temple level, Josephus had little problem with the Pharisees being in charge. Josephus extends additional praise to the Pharisees' overall process as well:

> But then as to the two other orders at first mentioned, the Pharisees are those who are esteemed most skillful in the exact explication of their laws, and introduce the first sect.

> These ascribe all to fate [or providence], and to Elohim, and yet allow, that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men, although fate does co-operate in every action. They say that all souls are incorruptible, but that the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies, - but that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment. But the Sadducees are those that compose the second order, and take away fate entirely, and suppose that Elohim is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they say, that to act what is good, or what is evil, is at men's own choice, and that the one or the other belongs so to every one, that they may act as they please. They also take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades. ***Moreover, the Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord, and regard for the public***; but the behavior of the Sadducees one towards another is in some degree wild, and their conversation with those that are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them.[60] And this is what I had to say concerning the philosophic sects among the Jews. (War, 2.8.14)

Note the use of ***"their laws***" (oral traditions) and not Torah by Josephus. This quote is one of the few times he seems to draw the distinction. In addition, his point seems further expounded upon when we consider the other phrase here, the so-called ***"notions of the Pharisees"*** referenced above, because there Josephus implies it is popular support of their policies, not Scripture, from which the Pharisees draw authority.

Finally, in the case of Josephus' account of Yochanan the Immerser, which we will examine later, we see him very upset about other traditions concerning the proper way to convene a trial. The rules of jurisprudence are clearly not directly from Torah, but they are applications from broader commands. So the validity of Oral Law is very much a situational decision for Josephus, and it is that flexibility that begins to show us exactly how he can depart from mainstream Pharisaic traditions when he deems it necessary.

If Josephus is strictly a Pharisee, why does he profess admiration for the early Nazarenes?

Indicators that Josephus' attained "rebel" status have to do with two main factors. First, Josephus has no concerns about documenting Jews who followed Yochanan the Immerser, Y'shua and his brother Ya'akov as normative Jews. This positive accounting of those whom a normal Pharisee would have viewed as heretics is in stark contrast to the Rabbinics who, in the year 90, pronounced a universal curse on these very same Nazarenes! Granted, Josephus was living in Rome at that time, but we can hardly doubt that such a huge event escaped his notice. This is especially true when we consider how detailed his accounts of the final destruction of Jerusalem were twenty years before – the destruction which was the catalyst that led to the new Rabbinic learning academies and this same curse. At the very least, Josephus' decision was certainly not mainstream for those of the Pharisee sect.

The second issue is that Josephus universally regarded the oppression of the Nazarenes as a bad thing, and yet it was policy for the Pharisees and their later Rabbinic brethren to do just that, and even sending an "enforcer" named Shaul of Tarsus (the apostle Paul) to give direct approval to the execution of these "heretics."[61] If Rav Shaul then called himself "a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee" how might the pre-conversion Shaul have viewed what Josephus wrote? In both cases, the writings of these men reveal that they can be proud of the way they advanced in Pharisaic traditions while at the same time feeling totally free to criticize other portions of those traditions and, if need be, to set them aside.

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60 The ironic part of this rebuke, of course, is that the Sadducees did what Josephus' detractors heavily criticized him for, namely cooperating with the Romans. Some of this sentiment also appears reflected in the Renewed Covenant as well, (Acts 4:1-4, 23:6-8).

61 See Acts 7:1-8:1, and two of Rav Shaul's admissions of guilt for his conduct in 1 Corinthians 15:9 and Galatians 1:13.

What can be attributed to Josephus's faith from the "Testimonium"?

> Now there was about this time Y'shua, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Mashiyach. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, (9) those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; (10) as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day. (Antiquities 18.3.3)

The first main criticism that this passage excites is: It doesn't belong here. Critics argue that a later editor recklessly inserted it here because the previous paragraphs referenced Pilate. There is some weight to this argument simply because Josephus references Yochanan the Immerser two chapters later, and he knew Yochanan came before Y'shua.

In addition, and unlike the Immerser reference, this paragraph can be easily removed from the narrative pieces before and after it, allowing the remaining pieces to make perfect sense. This is usually a sign of bad editing, as we see here:

> So he bid the Jews himself go away; but they boldly casting reproaches upon him, he gave the soldiers that signal which had been beforehand agreed on; who laid upon them much greater blows than ***Pilate had commanded them, and equally punished those that were tumultuous,*** and those that were not; nor did they spare them in the least: and since the people were unarmed, and were caught by men prepared for what they were about, there were a great number of them slain by this means, and others of them ran away wounded. And thus an end was put to this sedition…Now there was about this time Y'shua, a wise man…***About the same time also another sad calamity put the Jews into disorder***, and certain shameful practices happened about the temple of Isis that was at Rome…

It seems clear that it is at least plausible the Testimonium may have simply been put between two "Jewish calamities" under Pilate. The editing is also in stark contrast to the Immerser reference:

> So Aretas made this the first occasion of his enmity between him and Herod, who had also some quarrel with him about their limits at the country of Gamalitis. So they raised armies on both sides, and prepared for war, and sent their generals to fight instead of themselves; and when they had joined battle, ***all Herod's army was destroyed by the treachery of some fugitives***, who, though they were of the tetrarchy of Philip, joined with Aretas's army. So Herod wrote about these affairs to Tiberius, who being very angry at the attempt made by Aretas, wrote to Vitellius to make war upon him, and either to take him alive, and bring him to him in bonds, or to kill him, and send him his head. This was the charge that Tiberius gave to the president of Syria. ***Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from Elohim, and that very justly, as a punishment of what he did against Yochanan, that was called the Immerser: for Herod slew him***, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards Elohim, and so to come to baptism; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away [or the remission] of some sins [only], but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness. Now when [many] others came in crowds about him, for they were very greatly moved [or pleased] by hearing his words, ***Herod, who feared lest the great influence Yochanan had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion***, (for they seemed ready to do any thing he should advise,) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might

> make him repent of it when it would be too late. Accordingly he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death. ***Now the Jews had an opinion that the destruction of this army was sent as a punishment upon Herod, and a mark of Elohim's displeasure to him.*** (Antiquities, 18.5.1-2)

Looking at the highlighted portions, one can easily see how Yochanan cannot be removed from the narrative without the entire structure falling apart. Josephus even suggests that Yochanan's death invited a curse on Herod both before and after referencing him. Clearly then, this entire paragraph must stand as written by Josephus, but the same cannot be definitely said of the Testimonium. The problem with ruling absolutely against the Testimonium *en masse* is that this might only apply to a copyist or Christian editor's placement of the text, which does not prove the text invalid!

The second major theory is that the Testimonium is from Josephus, but that certain lines were added later; however, this is circular reasoning. If we understand that Josephus is a conventional Pharisee, then these "questionable" lines don't make sense coming from his pen. There would be no benefit of a "later insertion" attempting to "prove" Josephus was a conventional Pharisee!

Josephus likes to employ the phrase "who was called the____" in his writings. In the Ya'akov reference he says "Y'shua who was called the Mashiyach." Therefore, beliefs aside, it does seem out of character for Josephus to toggle from an absolute statement (he was the Mashiyach) in the disputed text to a neutral one in a non-disputed portion!

However, in fairness, this argument can cut both ways. If writing style in this case can throw doubt on parts of the Testimonium then concordance and agreement between the Testimonium and non-disputed portions of Josephus can have the opposite effect. Let's now investigate his Nazarene quote about Ya'akov:

> And now Caesar, upon hearing the death of Festus, sent Albinus into Judea, as procurator. But the king deprived Joseph of the high priesthood, and bestowed the succession to that dignity on the son of Ananus, who was also himself called Ananus. Now the report goes that this eldest Ananus proved a most fortunate man; for he had five sons who had all performed the office of a high priest to Elohim, and who had himself enjoyed that dignity a long time formerly, which had never happened to any other of our high priests. But this younger Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, (23) who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed; when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and ***Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the Sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Y'shua, who was called Mashiyach, whose name was Ya'akov, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned: but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were the most uneasy at the breach of the laws, they disliked what was done***; they also sent to the king [Agrippa], desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified; nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus, as he was upon his journey from Alexandria, and informed him that it was not lawful for Ananus to assemble a Sanhedrim without his consent. (24) ***Whereupon Albinus complied with what they said, and wrote in anger to Ananus, and threatened that he would bring him to punishment for what he had done; on which king Agrippa took the high priesthood from him, when he had ruled but three months, and made Joshua, the son of Damneus, high priest.*** (Antiquities 20.9.1)

When combining these sources, there is agreement on the following facts:

1) That a man named Y'shua was called the Mashiyach (anointed one).

2) That this Y'shua had many followers, particularly among Jews, and these men drew the ire and attention of Jewish and Roman authorities.

3) That the common accusation against these Nazarenes was that they were "Torah breakers" but Josephus himself calls those who wanted mercy on them "equitable" and those who sought their deaths as "unlawful."

4) That other Jewish authorities, unlike the Rabbinics who cursed the Nazarenes, are praised by Josephus for punishing those who deprived those Nazarenes of what was the ancient equivalent of their civil rights!

As a result, the rest of the Testimonium (less the strong Messianic verbiage) is very likely Josephus' authentic words:

> Now there was about this time Y'shua, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles, and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.

The final consideration for this section is this: Since even Y'shua's enemies both in his lifetime and later in Rabbinic polemics admit he could do miracles, there is no reason to suppose that the phrase "he was a doer of wonderful works" was not also from Josephus' pen.

Does Josephus quote from the Renewed Covenant writings?

It is clear that Josephus is aware of events and persons of the Renewed Covenant writings. However, finding actual quotes that rise to the level of his Tanakh reporting is difficult. On the other hand, there is a middle ground here between quoting and merely summarizing from historical sources, and that area resides with a Jewish storytelling and teaching technique known broadly as *Midrash.*

Derived from a Hebrew word meaning "lesson" – or more literally "comparison" – *midrash* refers to the way rabbis and sages have attempted to fill in gaps in knowledge in the scriptural record. They do this by either focusing on different snippets of text that on first glance seem unrelated, or by exploring linguistic clues in the multiple meanings of words.[62]

Under close scrutiny of the text we discover that Josephus is in fact midrashing key aspects of the Renewed Covenant writings; a very important fact that speaks volumes about the historian's own faith. Jews simply don't midrash a text unless they view its message as extremely sacred and important, and this was more true in Josephus' day than today. Therefore, this activity alone points to the true level of high regard that Josephus had not just for the people and events he mentions, but for the faith behind those people and events, and his view on the reliability of the Renewed Covenant writings as history in general.

Y'shua Son of Mercies from YHWH

The following are excerpts from Josephus' *War Against the Jews*, 6.5.3-4. However, Josephus' intentions appear to go far deeper than simply telling the story. Notice the opening line regarding the celestial events:

> Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied Elohim himself; while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretell their future desolation, but, like men infatuated,

62 For an excellent introduction to this topic, please consult *In Potiphar's House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts* (1994: Harvard University Press) by James L. Kugel.

without either eyes to see or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that Elohim made to them. ***Thus there was a star (20) resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year.***

The "star resembling a sword" sounds much like another iconic image from the Gospels:

> *"And when Y'shua was born in Beth-Lekhem of Yehuda, in the days of Herodus, the king, Magoshi came from the east to Urishlim. And they said, "Where is he who has been born the king of the Jews?* ***For we saw his star in the East and have come to worship him…And when they heard from the king, they departed, and behold the star which they saw in the East was going before them until it came and stood from over where the boy was. And when they saw the star, they rejoiced (with) very great joy"*** (Matthew 2:1-10).

The sword theme is also evident elsewhere in the Renewed Covenant writings:

> *"And Shimon blessed them and said to his mother Maryam, Behold this one is appointed for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign of dispute* ***and in your soul will pass through a spear so that thoughts of many hearts may be revealed"*** (Luke 2:34-35).

> *"For the Word of Elohim is living and all-efficient and* ***sharper than a two-edged sword****, and enters even to the severance of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow and the bones, and judges the thoughts and reasonings of the heart"* (Hebrews 4:12).

This also links to another part of Josephus' story:

> Thus also before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus, (21) [Nisan,] and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour.

Notice the timing: Passover is about to begin. A light shines around the Temple – there was a light at the resurrection and the Temple veil was torn in half. Also the ninth hour of the day is the time Y'shua died on the stake, but Josephus changes it to night instead!

And then the matter of earthquakes:

> *"Then again Y'shua cried out with a loud voice and gave up his spirit. And immediately, the curtains at the door of the temple were torn in two from the top to the bottom. And the earth was shaken and the rocks were split. And the tombs were opened and many bodies of the Set Apart believers*[63] *who were asleep arose, And went out. And after his resurrection, they entered into the Set Apart city and were seen by many.* ***And the centurion, and those with him who were watching Y'shua, when they saw the earthquake and those things that had occurred, they were very afraid and said, "Truly this was the Son of Elohim"*** (Matthew 27:50-54).

> *"****And behold a great earthquake occurred*** *for a Messenger of Master YHWH descended from heaven and came and rolled away the boulder from the entrance, and he was sitting upon it"* (Matthew 28:2).

Josephus' writes:

> Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the temple,] as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations,

63 Being "Set Apart" unto YHWH means to be led by the Ruach haKodesh to keep the Commandments of YHWH. Belief in itself does not make one Set Apart, even the demons "believe" in YHWH and His Mashiyach. See Ya'akov (James) 2:19.

> they said that, in the first place, ***they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence."***

This brings up another parallel in the book of Acts, about another earthquake happening on Shavuot or Pentecost as Josephus calls it:

> And after the days of Shavuot (Pentecost) were fulfilled, all were assembled as one. **All of a sudden there was a sound from heaven like a roaring wind and all that House in which they were sitting was filled.** And (it) appeared to them like tongues divided, and fire sat upon every one of them. And all of them were filled with the Ruach haKodesh, and they were compelled to speak in different tongues, just as the Spirit had given them to speak…"Behold we are hearing from them that they are proclaiming the wonders of Elohim in our language!" (Acts 2:1-11)

Then, Josephus' next line introduces his hero, a prophet of doom with a peculiar name and some interesting titles:

> But, what is still more terrible, there was one ***Y'shua, the son of Ananus a plebeian and a husbandman…***

Although Y'shua was a common name of the time, this title was not. "Y'shua bar Khanan-Yah" – This is the Aramaic form of the name which translates to ***Y'shua, son of our mercies (from) YHWH!***

Also notable is how Josephus employs this title for this particular man named Y'shua. The first phrase, "plebian," is a Greek word meaning "common man," which Y'shua surely was. The second word, "husbandman" is equivalent to a ***gardener***, and this is extremely significant because Y'shua called himself the vine and his followers, the branches, Nazarenes. Mary Magdala, when she saw Y'shua after he was raised from the dead, thought he was the gardener. The rabbis who would later compile slanders against Y'shua took this imagery from John's Gospel and made the gardener the one who buried Y'shua's body in secret.

Furthermore, in John 4, Y'shua used the Sower parable in his talk about followers being ripe for harvest. The point is: The code has been extended to read, ***Y'shua, son of our mercies (from) YHWH, a common man and planter of the branches*** (Netzarim). In other words, the branch (netzer) of Jesse discussed in Isaiah 11:1-2 who has the spirit of YHWH rest on him, and who is literally raised in Branch Town (Netzer-et), and this hero of Josephus – are one and the same! If there is any lingering doubt on the matter, then let's let Josephus speak for himself:

> [Y'shua bar Khanan-Yah], four years before the war began, and at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for every one to make tabernacles to Elohim in the temple, (23) began on a sudden to cry aloud, "***A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!***" This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city.

If this sounds familiar, it should:

> *"And Y'shua entered into the temple of Elohim and drove out all who were buying and selling in the temple. And he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the chairs of those who were selling doves. And he said to them,* ***It is written that my House will be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a cave of bandits"*** (Matthew 21:12-13).

> Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to

town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation. ***"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate.*** For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of YHWH.'"

*"Behold, because of this I will send to you prophets and wise men and scribes. Some of them you will kill, and you will execute them on stakes, and some of them you will scourge in your assemblies. And you will pursue them from city to city, So that will come upon you all the blood of the righteous…**Urishlim! Urishlim! Murderess of the prophets and stoner of those that are sent to her. How often I have desired to gather your children like a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you did not desire it! Behold, your house is left desolate"*** (Matthew 23:34-38).

And as for the "a voice from the east" and so on, Y'shua used very similar metaphors:

"For as the sunshine comes out from the East and is seen even in the West, thus will be the coming of the Son of man" (Matthew 24:27).

"And they will come from the east and from the west and from the south and from the north and they will recline in the Kingdom of Elohim" (Luke 13:29).

"The wind will blow where it desires, and you hear its voice. But you do not know from where it comes or to where it goes. Likewise is everyone who is born from spirit" (John 3:8).

"And I saw and heard an eagle which flew in the midst, and it had a tail of blood, while it said with a loud voice: Woe, woe, to them who dwell on the earth because of the remaining sounds of the trumpets of the three Messengers, who are to sound" (Revelation 8:13).

Josephus also continues to develop these themes further:

Now, during all the time that passed before the war began, this man did not go near any of the citizens, nor was seen by them while he said so; but he every day uttered these lamentable words, as if it were his premeditated vow, ***"Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" Nor did he give ill words to any of those that beat him every day, nor good words to those that gave him food; but this was his reply to all men, and indeed no other than a melancholy presage of what was to come. This cry of his was the loudest at the festivals...***

We begin to see what happens to this Y'shua. They beat him daily and he doesn't protest, just like a certain suffering servant in Isaiah 53. And like the Y'shua in the Gospels, this man's rebukes are loudest at the festivals of YHWH! Then, this is what happens to him when he speaks one word too many against the religious establishment:

However, certain of the most eminent among the populace had great indignation at this dire cry of his, and took up the man, and gave him a great number of severe stripes; yet did not he either say any thing for himself, or any thing peculiar to those that chastised him, but still went on with the same words which he cried before. Hereupon our rulers, supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!"

"Severe stripes…whipped till his bones were laid bare"! Indeed, this is a very apt description of the crucifixion, where Y'shua received very severe wounds, a crown of thorns on his head, impaled wrists and feet, and a spear thrust into his side! But there are still more parallels between Josephus' writings and accounts in the Renewed Covenant:

And when Albinus (for he was then our procurator) asked him, Who he was? and whence he came? and why he uttered such words? he made no manner of reply to what he said, but still did not leave off his melancholy ditty, till Albinus took him to be a madman, and dismissed him.

This portion speaks for itself: Albinus the procurator is standing in for Pilate in the midrash. The procurator thinks him mad and wants to let Y'shua go but is forced to punish him anyway! However, the most startling fact is that Josephus even accurately portrayed the execution site:

> For as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, "***Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!" And just as he added at the last, "Woe, woe to myself also***!" there came a stone out of one of the engines, and smote him, and killed him immediately; ***and as he was uttering the very same presages he gave up the ghost***.

Here we have Y'shua "going around upon the wall" – the exact place of the crucifixion was just outside the walls of Jerusalem. Y'shua then once more pronounces woe on Jerusalem, and then a woe on the Temple (one greater than Solomon is here) and then on himself (My spirit is troubled to the point of death). Then, to top it all off Josephus takes the fact that many attempted to stone the real Y'shua while he was alive and makes that the manner of his death here! Even the phrase "he gave up his spirit" is identical to what Matthew wrote.

Obviously, no amount of "coincidence" will convince some that Josephus was a follower of Y'shua haMashiyach. But his writings testify to a man who knew that he lived in momentous times and who likely became a prolific writer because of the extreme significance of events for not only himself but all the Jewish people. For the complete account please see Josephus' War 6.5.3-4.

What about the resurrection?

As Rav Shaul (the Apostle Paul) said, without belief in the resurrection of Y'shua our faith is worthless. So then, by what standard did Josephus' claim faith? Let us see, keeping in mind a pattern of Josephus interchanging events chronologically and adding codified phrases:

> And when I was sent by Titus Caesar with Cerealins, and a thousand horsemen, to a certain village called Thecoa, in order to know whether it were a place fit for a camp, as I came back, ***I saw many captives crucified, and remembered three of them as my former acquaintance***. I was very sorry at this in my mind, and went with tears in my eyes to Titus, and told him of them; so he immediately commanded them to be taken down, and to have the greatest care taken of them, in order to their recovery*;* yet two of them died under the physician's hands, while the third recovered. (Life, 1.75)

Is this coincidence or code? Note that he records Titus rather than Pilate, and a place called Thecoa rather than Jerusalem. Nevertheless, look at the basic storyline:

1) Three men are crucified in the same place.
2) An influential Jewish man (or two) comes to beg the Roman authorities to take them (or him) down from the stake.
3) One of the three crucified men recovers. The other two die.

Granted that three people are taken down from the stake, but the parallels remain striking. Y'shua is crucified with one man on each side. Furthermore, the phrase "under the physician's hands" seems redundant. Who else but a physician would Titus have employed? Compare this to Luke:

> *"Y'shua said to them, Perhaps you might tell me this parable, "**Physician heal yourself**. And all that we have heard that you did in Capurnakhum, do here also in your city." And he said, Truly I say to you that there is no prophet who is accepted in his own city"* (Luke 4:23-24).

Y'shua prophesied of naysayers taking up a parable against him, but he also stated that he has the power to raise up his own body from the grave (John 2:19). Isn't it interesting that Josephus suggests that one of the three crucified men recovered at "the physician's" hands?

The Gospel according to Josephus

If Josephus was able to subtly weave his Netzarim faith into his histories, then it stands to reason we may be able to recover his "Gospel" of sorts by similar means. Specific verses are used for brevity; however, the reader is encouraged to read the full account.

The Nativity

Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied Elohim himself; while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretell their future desolation, but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that Elohim made to them. Thus there was a star (20) resembling a sword, which stood over the city...and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour.

Yochanan the Immerser

Aretas (the king of Arabia Petres) and Herod (then) had a quarrel on the account following: Herod the tetrarch had, married the daughter of Aretas, and had lived with her a great while; but when he was once at Rome, he lodged with Herod, (15) who was his brother indeed, but not by the same mother; for this Herod was the son of the high priest Sireoh's daughter. However, he fell in love with Herodias, this last Herod's wife, who was the daughter of Aristobulus their brother, and the sister of Agrippa the Great. This man ventured to talk to her about a marriage between them; which address, when she admitted, an agreement was made for her to change her habitation, and come to him as soon as he should return from Rome: one article of this marriage also was this, that he should divorce Aretas's daughter.

So Antipus, when he had made this agreement, sailed to Rome; but when he had done there the business he went about, and was returned again, his wife having discovered the agreement he had made with Herodias, and having learned it before he had notice of her knowledge of the whole design, she desired him to send her to Macherus, which is a place in the borders of the dominions of Aretas and Herod, without informing him of any of her intentions.

Accordingly Herod sent her thither, as thinking his wife had not perceived any thing; now she had sent a good while before to Macherus, which was subject to her father and so all things necessary for her journey were made ready for her by the general of Aretas's army; and by that means she soon came into Arabia, under the conduct of the several generals, who carried her from one to another successively; and she soon came to her father, and told him of Herod's intentions.

So Aretas made this the first occasion of his enmity between him and Herod, who had also some quarrel with him about their limits at the country of Gamalitis. So they raised armies on both sides, and prepared for war, and sent their generals to fight instead of themselves; and when they had joined battle, all Herod's army was destroyed by the treachery of some fugitives, who, though they were of the tetrarchy of Philip, joined with Aretas's army.. So Herod wrote about these affairs to Tiberius, who being very angry at the attempt made by Aretas, wrote to Vitellius to make war upon him, and either to take him alive, and bring him to him in bonds, or to kill him, and send him his head. This was the charge that Tiberius gave to the president of Syria.

Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from Elohim, and that very justly, as a punishment of what he did against Yochanan, that was called the Immerser: for Herod slew him, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards Elohim, and so to come to immersion; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away [or the remission] of some sins [only], but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness.

Now when [many] others came in crowds about him, for they were very greatly moved [or pleased] by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, (for they seemed ready to do any thing he should advise,) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it would be too late. Accordingly he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death. Now the Jews had an opinion that the destruction of this army was sent as a punishment upon Herod, and a mark of Elohim's displeasure to him. (Antiquities 18.5.1-2)

Y'shua Bar Khanan-Yah begins his ministry

But, what is still more terrible, there was one Y'shua, the son of our mercies of YHWH, a common man and a branch (Netzer) planter, who... came to that feast whereon it is our custom for every one to make tabernacles to Elohim in the temple, (23) began on a sudden to cry aloud, 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!' This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city.

Y'shua's suffering, trial and execution

However, certain of the most eminent among the populace had great indignation at this dire cry of his, and took up the man, and gave him a great number of severe stripes; yet did not he either say any thing for himself, or any thing peculiar to those that chastised him, but still went on with the same words which he cried before.

Hereupon our rulers, supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem!'

And when...our procurator asked him, Who he was? and whence he came? and why he uttered such words? he made no manner of reply to what he said, but still did not leave off his melancholy ditty, till (the procurator) took him to be a madman, and dismissed him.

Now, during all the time that passed before the war began, this man did not go near any of the citizens, nor was seen by them while he said so; but he every day uttered these lamentable words, as if it were his premeditated vow, 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem!'

Nor did he give ill words to any of those that beat him every day, nor good words to those that gave him food; but this was his reply to all men, and indeed no other than a melancholy presage of what was to come. This cry of his was the loudest at the festivals... and he continued this ditty... without growing hoarse, or being tired therewith, until the very time that he saw his presage in earnest fulfilled in our siege, when it ceased; for as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, 'Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!' And just as he added at the last, 'Woe, woe to myself also!'...and as he was uttering the very same presages he gave up the ghost. (War 6.5.3)

Execution aftermath and resurrection

And when I was sent...to a certain village...as I came back I saw many captives crucified, and remembered three of them as my former acquaintance. I was very sorry at this in my mind, and went with tears in my eyes...and told him of them; so he immediately commanded them to be taken down, and to have the greatest care taken of them, in order to their recovery; yet two of them died...while the third recovered. (Life 1.75)

Ruach haKodesh comes at Shavuot

Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost...they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence." (War 6.5.3)

Y'shua's brother Ya'akov and other Nazarenes falsely persecuted as Torah-breakers

AND now Caesar, upon hearing the death of Festus, sent Albinus into Judea, as procurator. But the king deprived Joseph of the high priesthood, and bestowed the succession to that dignity on the son of Ananus, who was also himself called Ananus.

Now the report goes that this eldest Ananus proved a most fortunate man; for he had five sons who had all performed the office of a high priest to Elohim, and who had himself enjoyed that dignity a long time formerly, which had never happened to any other of our high priests.

But this younger Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, (23) who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed; when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority].

Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Y'shua, who was called Mashiyach, whose name was Ya'akov, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned: but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were the most uneasy at the breach of the laws, they disliked what was done; they also sent to the king [Agrippa], desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified; nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus, as he was upon his journey from Alexandria, and informed him that it was not lawful for Ananus to assemble a sanhedrim without his consent.

Whereupon Albinus complied with what they said, and wrote in anger to Ananus, and threatened that he would bring him to punishment for what he had done; on which king Agrippa took the high priesthood from him, when he had ruled but three months, and made Y'shua, the son of Damneus, high priest. (Antiquities 20.9.1)

When did Josephus become a Nazarene?

Perhaps the most difficult thing to determine based on his writings alone is when Josephus would have become a follower of Y'shua.

So when I had accomplished my desires, I returned back to the city, being now nineteen years old, and began to conduct myself according to the rules of the sect of the Pharisees, which is of kin to the sect of the Stoics, as the Greeks call them. (Life, 1.2)

Josephus refers to Jerusalem as "the city." When he was 19, or about the year 56/57, Jerusalem was a very busy city.[64] To get some idea about the "talk around town" please read Acts 21:27-22:29.

64 For an in-depth analysis as to how these events relate to common years 56-57, please see *Illustrated Dictionary and Concordance of the Bible* (GG The Jerusalem Publishing House, 1986), subject heading "Paul".

Yes, Rav Shaul was certainly stirring things up, but he was far from a lone voice. There were already myriads of Jews following Y'shua who were zealous for Torah (Acts 21:20). How then could Josephus, a man consecrated to history and learning everything he could about his own people, not have been there in Jerusalem when Rav Shaul was causing this tumult? How could he, as a newly dedicated 19 year old Pharisee not have rushed out there to engage this "heretic" – the "heretic" who in fact, had much in common with the historian. Both were mentored by the finest rabbis their country could produce, and both were Roman citizens caught up in the tidal forces between assimilation with the Gentiles and remaining faithful to their origins.

Similarly, neither Josephus nor Paul ever denied being a Pharisee or the son of a Pharisee. Once both men had committed to the sect – and in spite of any radical opinions they would hold later that opposed mainstream Pharisaic thought – they held their testimonies until death. Put simply, it is improbable that Josephus would not have "rubbed shoulders" with men like Paul, and we know from his own mouth that he was in Jerusalem at that time. What we don't know is if he made his decision to become a secret follower of Y'shua right then and there, or if Rav Shaul simply provided him teaching that bore fruit in his later years.

Why did Josephus midrash from the Renewed Covenant writings?

While it is impossible to know the full answer to this question, we can learn much about Josephus from the extensive writings he left behind. One piece to the puzzle comes from a fairly extensive rebuke he gives on the kind of Temple he would like to see, after the one he previously knew was destroyed:

> ***There ought also to be but one temple for one Elohim; for likeness is the constant foundation of agreement. This temple ought to be common to all men, because he is the common Elohim of all men.***

High priests are to be continually about his worship, over whom he that is the first by his birth is to be their ruler perpetually. His business must be to offer sacrifices to Elohim, together with those priests that are joined with him, to see that the laws be observed, to determine controversies, and to punish those that are convicted of injustice; while he that does not submit to him shall be subject to the same punishment, as if he had been guilty of impiety towards Elohim himself.

> ***When we offer sacrifices to him, we do it not in order to surfeit ourselves, or to be drunken; for such excesses are against the will of Elohim, and would be an occasion of injuries and of luxury; but by keeping ourselves sober, orderly, and ready for our other occupations, and being more temperate than others.***
>
> ***And for our duty at the sacrifices (22) themselves, we ought, in the first place, to pray for the common welfare of all, and after that for our own; for we are made for fellowship one with another, and he who prefers the common good before what is peculiar to himself is above all acceptable to Elohim***.
>
> ***And let our prayers and supplications be made humbly to Elohim, not [so much] that he would give us what is good, (for he hath already given that of his own accord, and hath proposed the same publicly to all***,) as that we may duly receive it, and when we have received it, may preserve it. Now the law has appointed several purifications at our sacrifices, whereby we are cleansed after a funeral, after what sometimes happens to us in bed, and after accompanying with our wives, and upon many other occasions, which it would be too long now to set down. And this is our doctrine concerning Elohim and his worship, and is the same that the law appoints for our practice. (Against Apion, 2.24)

Parallels between the teachings of Josephus and Y'shua are very obvious. In Revelation Yochanan bar Zawdee speaks of an idealized heavenly Temple coming down to Earth, and that the tabernacle

of YHWH is now with men again. This appears to be the hope that Josephus shared as well, but there are many more factors because Josephus viewed the destruction of the Temple, though he loved it very dearly, as inevitable:

> ***For that it was a seditious temper of our own that destroyed it, and that they were the tyrants among the Jews who brought the Roman power upon us***, who unwillingly attacked us, and occasioned the burning of our holy temple, Titus Caesar, who destroyed it, is himself a witness, who, daring the entire war, pitied the people who were kept under by the seditious, and did often voluntarily delay the taking of the city, and allowed time to the siege, in order to let the authors have opportunity for repentance. (Preface, War Against the Jews)

The same wonderful sign you had also experience of formerly, when the forementioned king of Babylon made war against us, and when he took the city, and burnt the temple; while yet I believe the Jews of that age were not so impious as you are.

> Wherefore I cannot but suppose that Elohim is fled out of his sanctuary, and stands on the side of those against whom you fight. Now even a man, if he be but a good man, will fly from an impure house, and will hate those that are in it; and do you persuade yourselves that Elohim will abide with you in your iniquities, who sees all secret things, and hears what is kept most private? Now what crime is there, I pray you, that is so much as kept secret among you, or is concealed by you? nay, what is there that is not open to your very enemies? ***For you show your transgressions after a pompous manner, and contend one with another which of you shall be more wicked than another; and you make a public demonstration of your injustice, as if it were virtue.***
>
> ***However, there is a place left for your preservation, if you be willing to accept of it; and Elohim is easily reconciled to those that confess their faults, and repent of them. O hard-hearted wretches as you are! cast away all your arms, and take pity of your country already going to ruin; return from your wicked ways, and have regard to the excellency of that city which you are going to betray, to that excellent temple with the donations of so many countries in it.*** (War, 5.9.18)
>
> So Titus retired into the tower of Antonia, and resolved to storm the temple the next day, early in the morning, with his whole army, and to encamp round about the holy house. ***But as for that house, Elohim had, for certain, long ago doomed it to the fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages; it was the tenth day of the month Lous, [Ab,] upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon...*** (War 6.4.5)

From here, though, we find Josephus to be an interesting study in contrasts. On the one hand, he is extremely proud of his heritage and scholarship within both Jewish and Gentile quarters:

THE family from which I am derived is not an ignoble one, but has descended all along from the priests; and as nobility among several people is of a different origin, so with us to be of the sacerdotal dignity, is an indication of the splendor of a family. Now, I am not only sprung from a sacerdotal family in general, but from the first of the twenty-four (1) courses; and as among us there is not only a considerable difference between one family of each course and another, I am of the chief family of that first course also; nay, further, by my mother I am of the royal blood; for the children of Asamoneus, from whom that family was derived, had both the office of the high priesthood, and the dignity of a king, for a long time together. (Life, 1.1)

And I am so bold as to say, now I have so completely perfected the work I proposed to myself to do, that no other person, whether he were a Jew or foreigner, had he ever so great an inclination to it, could so accurately deliver these accounts to the Greeks as is done in these books. For those of my own nation freely acknowledge that I far exceed them in the learning belonging to Jews; I

have also taken a great deal of pains to obtain the learning of the Greeks… (Antiquities 20.11.2) On the other hand as proud as he is, Josephus also seems to feel criticism towards him with particular acuity. He views any attack on his people by Gentiles as if it were directed exclusively at him, and criticism from other Jews as almost an act of betrayal. Let's see how Josephus handles these disputes from each group:

> It is true, these writers have the confidence to call their accounts histories; wherein yet they seem to me to fail of their own purpose, as well as to relate nothing that is sound. ***For they have a mind to demonstrate the greatness of the Romans, while they still diminish and lessen the actions of the Jews, as not discerning how it cannot be that those must appear to be great who have only conquered those that were little.*** Nor are they ashamed to overlook the length of the war, the multitude of the Roman forces who so greatly suffered in it, or the might of the commanders, whose great labors about Jerusalem will be deemed inglorious, if what they achieved be reckoned but a small matter. (Preface, War Against the Jews)

> And now I perceived innovations were already begun, and that there were a great many very much elevated in hopes of a revolt from the Romans. ***I therefore endeavored to put a stop to these tumultuous persons, and persuaded them to change their minds; and laid before their eyes against whom it was that they were going to fight, and told them that they were inferior to the Romans not only in martial skill, but also in good fortune***; and desired them not rashly, and after the most foolish manner, to bring on the dangers of the most terrible mischiefs upon their country, upon their families, and upon themselves. And this I said with vehement exhortation, because I foresaw that the end of such a war would be most unfortunate to us. But I could not persuade them; for the madness of desperate men was quite too hard for me.
>
> ***I was then afraid, lest, by inculcating these things so often, I should incur their hatred and their suspicions, as if I were of our enemies' party, and should run into the danger of being seized by them, and slain***; since they were already possessed of Antonia, which was the citadel; so I retired into the inner court of the temple. Yet did I go out of the temple again, after Manahem and the principal of the band of robbers were put to death, when I abode among the high priests and the chief of the Pharisees. But no small fear seized upon us when we saw the people in arms, while we ourselves knew not what we should do, and were not able to restrain the seditious. However, as the danger was directly upon us, we pretended that we were of the same opinion with them, but only advised them to be quiet for the present, and to let the enemy go away, still hoping that Gessius [Florus] would not be long ere he came, and that with great forces, and so put an end to these seditious proceedings…
>
> ***Nay, after that, when those that envied my good fortune did frequently bring accusations against me, by Elohim's providence I escaped them all… and when I had frequent accusations laid against me, he would not believe them. And Domitian, who succeeded, still augmented his respects to me; for he punished those Jews that were my accusers, and gave command that a servant of mine, who was a eunuch, and my accuser, should be punished.*** (Life, 1.4-5, 76)
>
> Nay, indeed, lest any Jews that lived elsewhere should convict him of his villainy, he extended his false accusations further, and persuaded Jonathan, and certain others that were caught with him, to bring an accusation of attempts for innovation against the Jews that were of the best character both at Alexandria and at Rome. ***One of these, against whom this treacherous accusation was laid, was Josephus, the writer of these books.*** However, this plot, thus contrived by Catullus, did not succeed according to his hopes; for though he came himself to Rome, and brought Jonathan and his companions

> along with him in bonds, and thought he should have had no further inquisition made as to those lies that were forged under his government, or by his means; yet did Vespasian suspect the matter and made an inquiry how far it was true. ***And when he understood that the accusation laid against the Jews was an unjust one, he cleared them of the crimes charged upon them, and this on account of Titus's concern about the matter, and brought a deserved punishment upon Jonathan; for he was first tormented, and then burnt alive.*** (War, 7.11.3)

And to these we must add one more quote that details Josephus' own personal situation, also from *Life 1.76*:

I also received from Vespasian no small quantity of land, as a free gift, in Judea… And these were the circumstances of my domestic affairs. However, the kindness of the emperor to me continued still the same; for when Vespasian was dead, Titus, who succeeded him in the government, kept up the same respect for me which I had from his father; He also made that country I had in Judea tax free, which is a mark of the greatest honor to him who hath it; nay, Domitia, the wife of Caesar, continued to do me kindnesses. And this is the account of the actions of my whole life; and let others judge of my character by them as they please. But to thee, O Epaphroditus, (28) thou most excellent of men! do I dedicate all this treatise of our Antiquities; and so, for the present, I here conclude the whole.

Josephus, in fact, lived under Roman protection, both in Rome and in Judea, for the last three decades of his life. And yet, he also doesn't want to offend his own people either, as if he expects them to forget his role – fair or not – in the destruction of the Temple! Regardless, his transformation from Jewish commander of the Galilee to Roman interpreter who basks in the glow of Caesar's favor came at a huge personal cost.

And so, in deference to both groups, Josephus walked a very fine line to express his faith in Y'shua of Nazareth. As stated at the beginning, he would have known the Rabbinics had placed a curse on the Nazarenes in the year 90, and continued a love-hate relationship with them for the rest of his life.

Although, for the Roman part in this drama, Josephus may have had a completely different motive: Survival. Put simply, the Romans were persecuting as many Jewish and Gentile followers of Y'shua as they could. It had begun under Emperor Nero in the 60's and would continue to break out periodically for the rest of Josephus' life. If his Gentile masters were to discover his beliefs his life would have been in jeopardy. However, it is clear from Antiquities 20.11.2 and elsewhere that Josephus considered himself a scholars' scholar, utterly unique in his qualifications to deliver the history he reports.[65] Consequently, he must have also thought himself able to continually deliver to diverse groups whatever they wanted to hear; in effect, playing it both ways against the middle.

As a result, part of him may have simply delighted in seeing what he could get away with. What could he say in praising Y'shua and his followers that might annoy but not exclude him from his Rabbinic brethren? Could he even go so far as to "tweak" his people by rubbing their faces in the facts that normal Jews of the time gave great weight to these people that the world would later dub as Christians? Why the whole idea in the Testimonium where he talks about massive numbers of Jews and Gentiles as a "tribe of Christians/Messianics" that all but shows them under a Jewish system of governance all their own? These are facts that later Rabbinic generations would try their hardest to forget, and yet Josephus exposed them for the entire world to see! The Romans weren't immune from this balancing act, either, for Josephus spared no details regarding their atrocities in Jerusalem, while also praising them just enough to stay in their good graces.

65 Much of his boasting, while a tad excessive and perhaps even distasteful at times, was probably also justified in light of the facts. It is impossible to fake the knowledge that Josephus had of his contemporary world, language and of his people.

But then, just when it seems as he is headed towards an outright confession of Y'shua as Mashiyach, he quickly changed course and/or provided just enough disinformation to remove himself from the debate. Fortunately for us, however, Josephus left enough clues to figure out his true intentions all these centuries later. He was perhaps the most famous secret Nazarene of them all, and the most successful at hiding his faith…until now.

Judaizers

The term "Judaizer" is a disparaging term aimed at those who conform to the spirit, character, principles, or practices of Judaism. In reality, followers of Y'shua who are labeled as Judaizers, rarely follow Rabbinical Judaism; all they are guilty of is having Torah written upon their hearts. Y'shua stated to the Pharisees, *"Why also do you transgress against the Commandments of Elohim because of your traditions?"* (Matthew 15:3) Regardless whether it is Pharisaical or Christian tradition, transgression against the Commandments of Elohim is certainly not at all acceptable to Y'shua.

Unfortunately, Christians who aren't familiar with Torah employ the term "Judaizer" to disgrace Christian or Messianic souls who are Torah observant; condemning them as having "fallen from Grace," "legalists," "pro-Jewish" or as "enemies of the gospel." In other words, Christians who choose to observe the Seventh Day Shabbat and the Biblical Feasts, or who follow a Torah based diet, risk being disgraced by other Christians for doing so.

Today, as in the First Century, there were various Judah-isms (sects of Judaism). Before Gentile based Christianity evolved, Gentiles were converts–to the original *Way* which was referred to as Netzarim Judaism. Apostle Paul was labeled as a *"ringleader of the sect of the Netzarim"* (Acts 24:5), clearly a Jewish sect. Jewish followers of Mashiyach brought Gentile converts into their homes, synagogues and into the Temple; therefore, the chain of Judaizing obviously returns back to Mashiyach himself as the quintessential "Judaizer." Essentially, anyone who keeps the Commandments of Elohim could be referred to as a Judaizer.

The term Judaism is derived from the tribe of Yehudah (Judah) which became prominent within the 12 tribes of Yisrael when YHWH anointed David as King and his son Solomon to build the Temple in Jerusalem. *"And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise YHWH: therefore she called his name Y'hudah; and left bearing"* (Gen. 29:35). Y'hudah (Judah) is derived from the Hebrew word *yadah* praise (or give thanks) the *yad* (hand) is extended in thanks to YHWH and is likened to the branches of the menorah that reach upwards towards heaven. In full context Yehudah means, "one who praises (or gives thanks to) YHWH."

The *toledot* (line) of Yehudah was highly honored by YHWH: *"The sceptre shall not depart from Yehudah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be"* (Gen. 49:10). YHWH orchestrated Mashiyach to be born into the line of David through the tribe of Yehudah. The scepter of Government and the Lawgiver is Mashiyach. Mashiyach is the seed of Awraham (Galatians 3:16) and the promised seed of woman (Gen. 3:15). The line of Mashiyach is both a genetic and spiritual continuum beginning with Adam and Eve and extending into the Olam HaBa (World to Come), after the 7,000th Millennium is complete.

Whether traditional Jewish tradition approved or not, the most prophetically defining moment for the Jewish people was when *"…Peelatos asked him and said to him, "Are you the king of the Yehudeans?" He said to him, 'You say it!'"* (Luke 23:3) It is unthinkable that the king of the Jews would teach against Torah since YHWH promised Moshe: *"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee"* (Deut. 18:18).

YHWH's Mashiyach is the true King of the Jewish people and, of course, it was Jews who first accepted Y'shua as their Mashiyach. It was Jews who were first called and believed in Mashiyach and who gave witness that Y'shua was Mashiyach, which opened the door for Gentiles to enter into the Kingdom of Elohim. And it was these Netzari Jews who originally "Judaized" Gentiles into the original Faith of Mashiyach. Jews were astonished when non-Jews began receiving the Ruach haKodesh (Acts 10:45) a fulfillment of Isaiah 11:10; 42:6; 49:6. The Judaism of YHWH *is* Mashiyach yet many Christians berate fellow believers for seeking to live according to a Torah observant lifestyle that was common to Y'shua and the *Shlichim* (Sent Ones).

Politics (and ism's) aside, most realize that the Kingdom of Elohim was portrayed in the Garden of Eden according to the *Tree of Life*. Every succeeding generation has been given access to that *Tree* through Mashiyach therefore it is Mashiyach who defines Judaism certainly not Jewish sects (Judaisms) that were and are largely comprised of those who reject Y'shua as Mashiyach. Mashiyach is the Word of YHWH, therefore it was Mashiyach who chose Y'hudah to carry the physical and spiritual line of Mashiyach from Awraham to the nations (Genesis 17). It is therefore Mashiyach who is both the Living Torah and quintessential Jew making it very ironic that Christians feel threatened by Torah-observant followers of Mashiyach.

If Mashiyach truly defines his followers, then according to the Book of Genesis, it was Mashiyach who established the Seventh Day Shabbat as His Appointment with mankind. It was Mashiyach who set the Sun, Moon and Stars in their places to establish His Moedim (Appointed Biblical Festivals) for all of mankind. Jews have been called to follow the *Ancient Paths* of YHWH that existed long before the tribe of Judah, but that *Ancient Path* is ultimately defined by Mashiyach Y'shua, who was born of a Jewish mother according to the Promise. Every person has the choice to be defined by Mashiyach or by an "ism," most Christians define themselves according to a denomination whether it be Catholic, Orthodox, Pentecostal, Baptist etc, according to their hierarchy of choice and of course most Jews subscribe to Reform, Orthodox, Conservative Judah-isms, etc. Although the Netzarim faith is Jewish to the core, it is most certainly not exclusive to either Jews or Gentiles, but it does reflect those who chose not to "*transgress against the Commandments of Elohim,"* in favor of either Jewish or Christian traditions.

Every denomination of "Christianity" and sect of "Judaism" has their own priesthood and "Mashiyach" and with so much religious diversity, it is clear that mankind has invented many "Mashiyachs," exactly what Y'shua warned would happen (Matthew 24:24). The post-apostolic Gentile church founders wanted their own religious traditions devoid of "Jewish" or Hebraic content and consequently changed YHWH's appointed times and laws, and became their own "Messiah" by making void the *Ancient Paths*. In essence, "the Church" abolished all those things that they deemed as "Jewish," when in fact Torah is YHWH's universal "blueprint" for human life according to Mashiyach! Precious few souls seem to appreciate that YHWH commanded that ***everyone*** who believes on Him as the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is to be Torah-observant:

"'Everyone who is native-born must do these things in this way when he brings an offering made by fire as an aroma pleasing to YHWH. For the generations to come, whenever an alien or anyone else living among you presents an offering made by fire as an aroma pleasing to YHWH, he must do exactly as you do. The community is to have the same rules for you and for the alien living among you; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the alien shall be the same before YHWH: The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and to the alien living among you'" (Numbers 15:13-16).

"And he came and proclaimed peace to you afar off, and to those near: Because by him there is access for us both, by one Spirit, to the Father. Wherefore you are not strangers nor sojourners, but you are fellow-citizens with the Set Apart believers and of the household of Elohim. And you are built upon the foundations of the Shlichim and the prophets; and Y'shua the Mashiyach has become the head of the corner in the edifice" (Ephesians 2:17-20).

Torah Observance is in fact Messianic Consciousness. Shabbat observance connects the spiritual man to eternity past and future; it is a *Way* to enter life in Mashiyach. Torah provides "platforms" for us to connect to Mashiyach, and through the power of Grace each redeemed soul enters new life *in* Mashiyach and allows Torah to be written upon their hearts. Few nowadays would suggest that putting trust in Mashiyach is "Judaizing," yet Christian tradition links the observance of Shabbat with "Judaism" rather than with Mashiyach who is the Master of Shabbat. Gentile Christianity has in many ways invented "another Jesus" (2 Cor. 11:4) by adopting a pagan framework from which to build the Greco-Roman based Christian religion.

The all-Gentile Christian Church has long viewed "Judaizers" as the single biggest threat to their Torah-breaking "liberty." The post-apostolic Gentile founders of the Church wrote extensive condemnation against the Judaizers and history is replete with Judaizers facing all manner of untimely death, torture and disgrace at the hands of "Church people." Cecil Roth notes in his publication, The Spanish Inquisition: During the Inquisition in Spain (1478–1808), 323,362 people were burned alive, 17,659 were burned in effigy. But by far, the greatest number of cases tried were for Judaizing (Cecil Roth, 1964. The Spanish Inquisition. USA: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.).

The Gentile Christian Church was clearly founded upon anti-Torah, anti-Semitic principles that existed in the minds of its founders long before they became "Christians" and this sentiment is evidenced today by Christians who disgrace others as being "Judaizers" for returning to the original Faith of Mashiyach. *"My beloved, while I take all pains to write to you of our common life, it is needful for me to write to you, exhorting you to maintain a conflict for the faith which was once delivered to the Set Apart believers"* (Yehuda 3). Notice that there was and has always been a *"conflict"* for the faith and whether the Judaizer likes it or not, he or she is at the middle of this conflict. If you feel you are somewhere in between Judaism and Christianity, you will understand this perfectly. Those who are born Jewish but have converted to Christianity are often pressured into giving up their "Jewish" lifestyles so they won't "Judaize" fellow Christians. Those who weren't born Jewish but who want to live a Torah based lifestyle like Mashiyach himself are pressured into giving up Y'shua by traditional Judaism.

Christians who employ the term "Judaizer" to disgrace others for "fulfilling and observing Torah" (Acts 21:24) are demonstrating enmity for both the Renewed Covenant and YHWH's own people: *"Haven't you noticed that these people are saying, YHWH has rejected the two families he chose? Hence they despise My people and no longer look at them as a nation"* (Jer. 33:24).

In modern times a majority of Christians theologize that the State of Israel no longer belongs to Jews, that the Covenant YHWH gave the Israelites is conditional and therefore annuled because of Israel's disobedience. Through its theological posturing the Gentile church sees itself as "spiritual Israel" and therefore the sole heirs to the promises and blessings, all while breaking the Renewed Covenant and disparaging others from allowing Torah to be written upon their hearts. Although Replacement Theology is a self-serving fallacy of the mainstream Church, numerous Christian minorities refuse to endorse it. However, Christians who don't subscribe to Replacement Theology also risk being numbered among the "Judaizers," simply because they understand the nature of the irrevocable Covenant that is based on the Word of YHWH according to eternal Promises. In reality YHWH forgives the Jewish people their transgressions according to the same Mercy that He offers Gentiles. YHWH is no respecter of persons.

Gentile Judaizers

When Gentiles first began to follow Y'shua Mashiyach they were referred to as "Fearers of Elohim." In the early days Gentiles met in synagogues with both Jewish followers of Y'shua and traditional religious Jews. As the Jewish Apostles were establishing *halachic* (way to walk) needs for believing Gentiles, it was incumbent upon Jewish believers to demonstrate temperance towards new Gentile converts who were leaving pagan lifestyles to enter into the Kingdom of

Elohim. A dispute arose between Rav Shaul and Keefa that brought issues of *halakha* front and center; at one point Barnabas refrained from dining with Gentiles because of peer pressure from those of traditional religious backgrounds. However, it is obvious that an anti-Judaizing campaign also evolved among secular Gentiles who disapproved of family and friends following the "Jewish Mashiyach." Originally, it was unbelieving Gentiles who opposed the Netzari lifestyle, not Jews; but ironically it was Apostle Paul (Apostle to the Gentiles) who wrote some of the strongest words: *"But that what the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to Elohim. And I would not that you should be associates of demons. You cannot drink the cup of our Master and the cup of demons; and you cannot be partakers at the table of our Master, and at the table of demons"* (1 Cor. 10:20, 21).

Gentiles who follow Y'shua have always been required to break from popular Gentile cultural traditions that oppose Mashiyach and Torah; nothing in this regard has ever changed. However, nowadays the Christian majority is in clear opposition to the original Hebrew/Aramaic-based lifestyle of Y'shua and his followers in favor of traditional Gentile lifestyles. Apostle Paul gave a clear warning against this; *"For if he that comes to you, had proclaimed to you another Y'shua, whom we have not proclaimed; or if you had received another Spirit, which you have not received; or another gospel, which you have not accepted; you might well have given your permission"* (2 Corinthians 11:4). The irony is that anti-Torah Christianity views its Gentile traditions and culture as though it were the original faith, and shows very little regard for the *Ancient Paths* of YHWH (Jeremiah 6:16) that have progressively been revealed since the dawn of time. Faith in Mashiyach is not a doctrine, but an action and lifestyle that is conformed into the Image of Elohim.

Most people never think of the fact that Noah could have been categorized by his contemporaries as a notorious "Judaizer" because he was deeply entrenched in "YHWHism" the foundation of Netzari Judaism. In Noah's day the earth had spawned its own "alternative" anti-YHWH religions. During the hundred years it took Noah to build the ark one can easily imagine his unpopularity for suggesting that YHWH was displeased with mankind's bad choices. But, in these latter days "the Church" reflects the same anti-Torah, anti-YHWH spirit as those of Noah's day. Noah's salvation was an act of Mashiyach; it is Mashiyach who forever bears witness of YHWH as the Voice of YHWH who spoke to Noah and guided and protected him.

Jewish Judaizers

In Rabbinical circles Jews are cautioned against making Torah "attractive to the Gentiles." Much of this sentiment evolved when the Gentile Church began tormenting Jewish and Gentile Christians for "Judaizing." Constantine and his mother made it official for Christians to hate the Judaizers (321 AD).

One must also consider how Judaizing became so unpopular among Jews. Imagine being Jewish and sharing your faith with a Gentile friend, only to later find them strung up on a Christian torture stake for "Judaizing." The Roman Christians traditionally crucified people next to busy roadways to instill fear in the rest of the population. Certainly such deep "Christian" hatred towards Judaism forced the Jewish people from making Torah attractive to Gentiles.

It is important to note that Abraham was not "Jewish" by birth but yet he is the father of Faith for both Christianity and Judaism. Abraham heavily "Judaized" his 318 servants into getting circumcised and putting their trust in YHWH, clearly YHWH loved Abraham for his heartfelt loyalty and obedience. Moshe spoke "mouth to mouth" with YHWH and – of course – he "Judaized" not only all the 12 tribes of Yisrael, but the mixed multitude of Gentiles who came out of Egypt along with the Israelites.

Paul the Judaizer

"…If you who are Yehudeans, live as Arameans; why do you urge the Gentiles who have joined themselves to Yehuda to live as Yehudeans?" (Galatians 2:14) This verse is cited as proof that Paul was an anti-Judaizer. Many Christians are of the opinion that Paul was speaking against Judaizing and one translation even goes so far as to spell that out; *"…If thou, being a Jew, in the manner of the nations dost live, and not in the manner of the Jews, how the nations dost thou compel to Judaize?"* (Galatians 2:14 Young's Literal Translation) The clear implication here is that Gentiles are being compelled to live according to Jewish traditions. But the sad reality is that most Christians are virtually incapable of distinguishing between what is Jewish tradition and what are Torah observant lifestyle distinctions according to Mashiyach, often a very big difference.

Rabbinical Judaism imposes plenty of religious traditions on its followers to be circumcised and keep their traditional interpretations of the "law of Moses" – a much different "law of Moses" than how Mashiyach himself revealed and interpreted Torah. In reality, those who are Torah observant realize that having Torah written upon the heart is a spiritual process; but religious politics is what pressures people to conform to religious tradition.

Circumcision, for example, is a Torah Commandment; but how and when a converted person is circumcised is very dependent upon the leading of the Ruach haKodesh, not on political or religious forces. For Christianity to annul circumcision because of how it was ministered by Rabbinical Judaism simply demonstrates brute ignorance of the *Way* of Mashiyach. Paul demonstrates in many places that he, as a Pharisee who follows Y'shua, would not tolerate Rabbinical religious authority to be lorded over Jews or Gentiles; he distinguished between man's religious tradition and Mashiyach's truth.

"And Elohim who knows what is in the hearts testified concerning them and gave to them the Ruach haKodesh as (he did) to us. And He differentiates nothing between them and us because He cleansed their hearts by faith. And now, why do you test Elohim so as to place a yoke upon the neck of the disciples that which not even our forefathers nor us were able to carry?" (Acts 15:8-10) Notice that Paul teaches that Elohim differentiates nothing between Gentiles and Jews, yet both Rabbinical Judaism and Christian tradition puts Jews and Gentiles into two very different categories for Torah observance. The yoke Paul speaks of is the oral law; the traditions of the forefathers are halachic legal requirements that are a product of religion, not of the Ruach haKodesh. Yet most Gentile Christian leaders are willfully ignorant of the fact that Torah is neither a yoke nor a burden to the household of Faith. Those who believe Torah to be a yoke are clearly serving humanist self-serving traditions. Yochanan says, *"For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep his Commandments: and his Commandments are not burdensome"* (1 Yochanan 5:3).

Judaizing in the World to Come

"Thus says YHWH of Hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the hem (wing or border) of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that Elohim is with you." (Zechariah 8:23). In reality, YHWH Himself forecasts His own efforts to "Judaize" by showing Himself strong on behalf of the Jew. For those who believe this prophetically refers to Mashiyach, the quintessential "Jew," then it stands that only a false religious system would attempt to disrobe Y'shua of his "Jewishness." The "hem" of the garment is where *tzit tzit* (fringes) are located (Numbers 15:38, 39). *Tzit tzit* are for a remembrance of YHWH's Torah to protect us from being drawn away by the lusts of the carnal flesh. Y'shua wore *tzit tzit;* therefore, when one "touches" the hem of Y'shua's garment it symbolizes their acceptance of his headship and Torah-based Government.

Conclusion

Although many Christians have long used the term "Judaizer" to disgrace fellow Christians and Messianic believers, the reality is that Y'shua Mashiyach is calling a Set Apart and spiritually renewed people out of the world – those who are not conformed to this world or the religions of it, but renewed in mind and spirit and who have the Word of YHWH (Torah) written upon their hearts. The condemnatory and judgmental Christian spirit against the "Judaizers" is a straw man that hides ignorance and spiritually immature religious prejudices; it is one of the hallmarks of the false Church system.

All who enter into the Kingdom of Elohim and live like Y'shua and his Shlichim run the risk of being marginalized by the mainstream Christian status quo. The negative or condescending spirit against "the Judaizers" is a product of the demonic world that inspires the lower nature of mankind to fear what it does not understand. Scriptural elements of Messianic culture that are considered as "Judaizing" by some, are providing intimate experiences in Mashiyach for many others. It is very contrary to the Spirit of Mashiyach to harbor inter-religious hatred between persons of Christian, Jewish or Muslim religions because of each one's observance and personal disciplines. Rav Shaul taught, "*Who are you, that you judge a servant not yours…"* (Romans 14:4).

Khabouris Codex

The Khabouris Codex was first revealed to America in April 1954. Initially presented at the White House to President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, it was escorted via police motorcade and armed guards, along with much pomp and circumstance to the Library of Congress for display. The Chaplain to the United States Senate, Frederick Brown Harris referred to it as the "N.T. (New Testament) Time Bomb." His words were recorded in a newspaper article as follows:

"…Here are the very syllables as they fell from His lips when the matchless Teacher was here among men. It is a record to make the heart leap with excitement. Somehow, it is like hearing the One whose birth broke the ages in two, talking to our modern age without a language barrier between. Here is not a translation of the words, but the words themselves of that One…who declared: 'My words shall not pass away. They are spirit and they are life.' Gazing across the years to be, He warned that those who defy His precepts, which are the laws of life, will be ground to powder. What treasures will be found as the very language of Jesus is studied can only be imagined."

The Khabouris Codex was found in the library of a small church in Kurdistan whose remaining contents were later seized by Turkish authorities in 1966 and brought to Ankara, Turkey. In that same year the Turkish government seized all the other remaining contents of the Kurdistan church (1966), the Khabouris Codex was given as a gift to the Yonan Codex Foundation by two Americans; and, in 1970, the Yonan Codex Foundation published a book entitled, "Enlightenment" which discussed the Codex and brought much of the contents to light.

On June 7, 1965 the Archdeacon and Pastor Sadook De Mar Shimun, B.A.B.D., verified and described the Khabouris codex as follows:

"The Manuscript is written on animal skin, and consists of 254 leaves (folios). They measure about 10" plus x 7". The writing is in black ink, now somewhat brownish, and is in one column of 29 lines to the page. Titles and subscriptions of books are in red ink, as well as the names of the places where they were written. The handwriting is uniform and very skilful, evidently the work of one scribe…The manuscript was written as a whole New Testament of the twenty-two books of the Oriental Canon, which excludes Revelation and four short Epistles (2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Jude)...

"The significance of the Codex should be based on the following factors, each of which is of supreme importance. Its colophon which ascribes it to the first decade of the 3rd century, makes it the oldest Syriac-Aramaic known to exist." This 3rd century date however, is more conservative than how most scholars interpret the colophon today. The most natural conclusion is the reference, "dated one hundred years from the Great Persecution" that refers to about year 164 CE, which would ascribe the Great Persecution as the first one in history that occurred in the reign of Nero, after he set Rome ablaze and blamed the fire on Christians and Nazarenes. Over time, older pages had been replaced and new ones dated to centuries later.

"Its complete text offers the scholars a source of information hereto-fore lacking in the Aramaic field…it should be remembered that the Syria-Aramaic Canon and text of the New Testament were already long established before the Christological disputes, which were then smoldering, and finally erupted in the fifth century, first divided the so-called Nestorians and then the Monophysites…Because this Manuscript is our first such whole New Testament, with so early a colophon, it becomes invaluable beyond comparison as a primary source in text criticism. It should be born in mind the authority which its early date commands."

"For it was His language as well as that of His disciples and the people to whom He proclaimed His teachings. Aramaic studies thus play a key role in the New Testament problems, many of which are hotly contested problems of understanding, interpretation, translation, transmission, etc. Whatever we can glean from such studies increases the value of the New Testament to us. The significance of the prime source which the Khabouris Codex offers scarcely needs to be pointed out."

In recent years high quality digital photos of the text were made and distributed online for all interested parties. One would have thought that the Khabouris Codex would have brought much excitement to the Christian community, but quite the opposite has happened, and at time of printing most pastors have never heard of the Khabouris Codex, much less could hold an intelligent conversation about it. Perhaps as you study the Aramaic for yourself it will become obvious as to why such an ancient authority has remained unpopular….

All we like sheep have gone astray. The burden of change is not upon ancient and reliable texts to modify and conform to contemporary religious ideals; the burden of change is upon mankind to return to *"the faith which was once delivered."*

King of Kings and Master of Masters

Part 1 Revelation 17:14

The Aramaic in Revelation 17:14 ***"malka d'malka mara maraota"*** stands out for two reasons. First, unlike the conjugation for "*King of Kings" (malka d'malka)*, there is no dalet proclitic to read as "of" between the words "*mara"* (master) and *maraota*" (masters). Also the general rule of Aramaic nouns is that a "***ta***" ending indicates the feminine! The combination of these two oddities together suggests that an additional meaning is intended along with the generally accepted reading of *"King of Kings and Master of Masters."* One possibility is that the word we think of as "Masters" is actually another noun derived from the same root but which takes on a feminine form when spelled this way. An example of this use is in Colossians 1:16, where it means "dominion" in what grammarians call the singular emphatic state. Therefore, one could read this sentence as a clarification of a thought rather than a synonymous mirror – echo, as "King of Kings and Master of (all) dominions," which would closely parallel descriptions of Mashiyach in Daniel 7.

However, there are other aspects of this phrase which must also be considered. First is the use of "metaphoric transference" which is an exception to the rule when Hebrew and Aramaic terms for

"Lordship" are applied to YHWH or His Son. In the Aramaic portions of Daniel 5:21-23 we see the word "mara" used both for pagan deities and YHWH. From Path to Life (page 163):

"The reader will recall that in "Definitions of MarYah" the related word also used in the above Scripture, Mara, is defined in terms of human kings or false deities, not YHWH. Only a few pages later and it seems as this rule is broken - or is it? What is going on in this case is a phenomenon I refer to as metaphoric transference. Put simply, metaphoric transference means that two concepts that are not alike at all in reality are linked through metaphor as though they were. In this case, the pagan court of Belshazzar does not know the personal name for the Creator, YHWH. But their Aramaic dialect certainly is used to address their false gods with the title Mara. Enter Daniel, who is in this one instance transferring this word temporarily to YHWH to make a point that the deities the Babylonians think are supreme are false and have no power – they are dust compared to the real Master – Mara of Heaven!

"In later times then, Jews who stayed behind in Babylon would simply take off the alap and strip the word down to the root level so that it would not appear to have dual pagan – Yahwistic use; hence "MarYah" which was not used in Daniel's time but which clearly grew out of this usage in his book. Furthermore, it is very easy to see Daniel as the pivot point in the usage for this word for two special reasons:

1) This portion of Daniel is in Babylonian Aramaic, in a form fairly close to the later Babylonian variety that the Peshitta Tanakh would be translated into. As a result, it is also no coincidence that Daniel is the only Tanakh book to even have this word.

2) The use of Mara in Daniel is effectively split between human (4:19, 23) and divine (2:47, 5:23) applications, which is also instructive in showing how the root Mar would become attached to Yah later.

"Another key point is: just because the metaphoric usage ends up referring to YHWH, does not mean it is equivalent to the Name of YHWH by its plain definition or usage."

So it is important to note that in Daniel and Revelation there are metaphoric usages of "Lordship" that do not appear anywhere else in Tanakh or NT; and, the kinship between Daniel and Revelation is not just thematic, but is linked with Aramaic in both books. We see this kind of ironic metaphoric transference also in Tanakh, where the prophet Elijah mocks non-existent deities in 1 Kings 18:27 by saying to the pagan priests: *"Shout louder! Surely he (Baal) is an elohim! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened."*

Another factor that must be noted is: Who is Y'shua referring to as ***"King of Kings and Master of Masters"***? In Revelation 17:14, the narrator says this applies to Y'shua. However, 1 Timothy 6:15-16 says something different: *"Almighty Elohim, King of Kings and Master of Masters who only is incorruptible and dwells in light to which no one can approach; and whom no man has seen, or even can see: to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."* Here Rav Shaul uses the same phrase to apply to YHWH alone. Can both be true? The answer is clearly yes, because YHWH gives life, power and authority in His will to the Son (Yochanan 5:25-26), who was the Miltha/Word acting on YHWH's commands. Y'shua clearly came in his Father YHWH's Name, and when someone comes in the name of a king in the Middle East and elsewhere, they bear authority from the king to stand and act on behalf of the king when he is not physically present. Obviously YHWH is omnipresent, but the model holds true because His Son was the physical embodiment of His authority on Earth, which is why the Son judges on behalf of the Father but the Father metes out actual judgment and is the only One who knows future appointed times as stated in Matthew 7:21, 24:36; Yochanan 5:30, 8:15-16.

Part 2 Revelation 19:16

The dual meaning of *"King of Kings and Master of Masters"* from Revelation 17:14 is also present here. In this case however, a totally new vista of possible understanding opens up with

the detail of the name being inscribed on Y'shua's thigh. The significance of the area of the thigh principally comes from the patriarch Ya'akov wrestling with a heavenly messenger – possibly Y'shua himself as the Face of El – and having that Divine Being touch him on that part of his leg (Genesis 32:24-26). Also, even prior to that event, the thigh was an area that the patriarchs used to impart sacred promises (Genesis 24:1-9), of which Mashiyach is the most important! However, there is another connection of this matter of the thigh that is not quite as obvious. Path to Life (pages 20-23) references the research of Neil Altman (a Dead Seas Scrolls expert) and investigative reporters David Chowder and Bill Norton. They wrote an article entitled, "Support for the Gospel of Matthew Comes from an Unlikely Place" which appeared in the Kansas City Star, January 7th, 2004.

Their article addressed an ancient fragment of the Talmud that mentions a parody of the Gospel of Matthew written by Gamaliel, the same Rabbi who taught Rav Shaul (Acts 22:1-3). The main significance of this find was that Gamaliel died in the 73 CE, which would mean that if the parody of Matthew belonged to him, the original book of Matthew circulated at least two decades earlier than most scholars previously believed. Gamaliel was and is an extremely important Rabbi in Rabbinical Judaism; many of his teachings were passed down into later traditions like the Talmud. About a hundred years later, Gamaliel's parody of Matthew would have likely found its way into the hands of Rabbi Tarphon, who had a famous debate with Justin Martyr in the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was also the residence of Yochanan bar Zawdi prior to his exile to the island of Patmos, where Revelation would be finished. However, because Yochanan's previous fame was associated with this city, this same book of Revelation is mentioned by both men in their debate many decades later.

Why is this important? Because from this time onward, the Rabbinic schools were collecting their own apologetics against the teachings of Mashiyach Y'shua. Known as the *Toldot Yeshu*, the work reached its final written stage in about the Sixth Century, but it was well known that earlier written and oral versions were also in circulation. Three of these versions may have had their origins based on the two Gospels and Revelation.

The end of Matthew relates how the Pharisees began propagating a lie that the talmidim stole the body of Mashiyach at night, a theme that is also loosely echoed in the *Toldot Yeshu*. Later, perverting a theme in Yochanan's Gospel, the body of Mashiyach is found buried by a gardener – as opposed to Mashiyach being mistaken for a gardener himself – as though the talmidim tried to fake the resurrection. But, if ancient traditional sources are correct, the same Yochanan who wrote the Good News of Yochanan, also wrote the Book of Revelation.

So here is where all these threads tie together: In the final version of *Toldot Yeshu*, the Pharisees invent an elaborate myth about Mashiyach's miracles being as a result of his copying the original 72-letter name of YHWH onto a small piece of parchment, the Name that was inscribed on the foundation stone of the Temple; a Name that other legends say was spoken to create the universe. Since this kind of "divine forgery" is a capital offense the myth suggests that "Yeshu" concealed the holy Name by cutting a hole in the skin of his thigh and placing the paper inside it! Perhaps the phrase "King of Kings and Master of Masters" was contained in the "72-letter name" that was lost? Another weird aspect to this legend of the Pharisees continues along the lines that Yehuda the traitor became a hero and fought back with the same name. Then, by "defiling Yeshu in the air" the holy letters escape both men, rendering them powerless – but not before explaining the source of the false Mashiyach's healing powers. In fairness, we do not know to what extent either Rabbi Gamaliel or Rabbi Tarphon may have directly contributed to the *Toldot Yeshu* in its final form, but the fact remains they had opportunities to be aware of that work and perhaps spin a tale or two of their own. Therefore, it could very well be that what Rabbi Gamaliel helped begin, Rabbi Tarfon might well have further developed in part by reading Revelation prior to his debate with Justin Martyr.

Legalism

Legalism is a theological term that was coined circa 1830-1840. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines legalism as: (a) preference of the Law to the Gospel, (b) doctrine of justification by works, (c) exaltation of law, (d) formula, or (e) red tape. "Legalism" is a Christian term that Christians apply to Christians, Jews, Muslims and others who promote the function of "Law" as it pertains to righteousness and salvation. The Oxford definition postures that some individuals prefer the Law over the Gospel, pitting the two concepts against each other, when in reality the Gospel was given in conjunction with "Law." The Law specifies what is good and acceptable conduct according to YHWH, and provides guidelines for righteousness and repentance, which are integral components of "the Gospel."

From the ancient Paleo Hebrew letters that spell Torah (mistranslated as "the Law"), a word picture emerges that means, the "Seal or Covenant-Head of Man-Revealed." Torah is the Covenant and Seal that YHWH progressively revealed to mankind through Adam, Noach, Awraham and all His chosen prophets and people. The word Torah contains the Hebrew sound "owr" which means light. YHWH declared through Isaiah: *"To the Torah (law) and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"* (Isaiah 8:20). The Psalmist teaches that the Word of YHWH (Torah) is a Light unto our paths.

Torah means *instruction in righteousness* and is likened to a person aiming and shooting at a target. Unfortunately, sometimes we miss the mark and "sin." A child is not expected to hit the mark as well as an adult, but when YHWH gave Torah He did *not* make His instructions impossible to "hit" as many have been led to believe.

The instructions (Torah) of YHWH have been progressively revealed from Adam and Eve right through to Mashiyach. However, many Christians muse that Torah is "legalism" and something that is supposedly impossible to keep and, consequently, they have replaced Torah principles with the more popular Christian traditions of the post-apostolic Gentile Church founders.

We are introduced to the consequences of breaking "the Law" (Torah) in the beginning of the Bible (Genesis 3) where the very first case of blatant disobedience occurred – an act that impacted the children of Adam and Eve and every single generation of man since then! Because of that one act of disobedience, man has been "born into a world full of death and evil" ever since; constantly forced to battle the wiles of the Evil One and facing possible eternal separation from YHWH. Before sin, Adam and Eve were clothed in righteousness (the Light of Mashiyach); but haSatan exposed their nakedness through guilt, shame and condemnation. Guilt (which results from wrong-doing, is spiritual separation), is a function of the Ruach haKodesh; it is a spiritual force that motivates us to make it right with YHWH and one another. The guilty parties – not knowing whether they will be forgiven their transgression until they confess and present their case – feel sorrow, emptiness, depression and despair for breaking faith and violating the peace and harmony of Mashiyach. The shame that Adam and Eve experienced was compounded in the knowledge that their sin had been preventable, and that they had needlessly and willingly exposed themselves to a difficult situation that caused them to risk everything without considering the consequences.

The curses against Adam and Eve became part of universal natural law that applies to all inhabitants of the Earth. *"Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever..."* (Genesis 3:22). Man was formerly a sinless and immortal being who became as the angelic host to know good and evil (many believe that the angelic war between good and evil is what spawned the creation of mankind); therefore, YHWH provided redemption through death and resurrection. The plan of redemption is this Good News that Mashiyach demonstrated through his resurrection as the "Firstfruits" of all Creation. Mankind has always been sustained according to the Word of YHWH, "*For YHWH is our judge, YHWH is our lawgiver, YHWH is our king; He will save us"* (Isaiah 33:22).

Long before Y'shua arrived on Earth, Torah Observant Jews were teaching that ***"her seed"*** points to Mashiyach who is the foundation of all "Good News": *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and* ***her seed****; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel"* (Genesis 3:15). Hebrews 4:2 states that *"the Gospel was preached unto them"* – therefore, those who left Egypt were given the opportunity to respond to the Gospel; therefore, the Gospel originated long before the First Century.

A popular theological spin on "the Gospel" is that "Jesus kept the Law" (Torah) so that Christians wouldn't have to. The anti-legalist Christian purports "freedom in Christ" which is simply religious justification to break Torah and put the full responsibility and penalty of past, present and future sins upon Jesus. However, those branded as legalists are trusting that Y'shua empowers them to be renewed in body, mind and spirit so as to put away their own carnal flesh that desires to break Torah.

There have been many lawgivers but it is YHWH's Torah and His Mashiyach that sustains the plan of Redemption. His Word is His LAW! Therefore, all theological posturing that pits Torah against the Gospel is deception. Having Torah "written upon the heart" is at the heart of the Renewed Covenant which completes the revelation of "the Good News."

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49:10). The Scepter is the imperial rod of divine lawmaking and justice. YHWH holds the Scepter who is Mashiyach. The "lawgiver from between his feet" refers to the lineage of Yehudah (Judah); therefore, successive generations of Judah "hold" this Scepter until Shiloh (Mashiyach) takes his seat over all other "lawmakers." Therefore, the "Way" of righteousness was, is and always will be prophetically connected through the Judaic and Hebraic-based Faith that Mashiyach Y'shua revealed to the world. Through belief in him, *the Final Sin Sacrifice*, we are able to receive YHWH's Mercy and Grace which assures us eternal life in heaven.

Thanks to His Mercy and Grace – which in no way negates Torah! – we were loved while we were yet sinners. Therefore, how much more do we desire to please our Father? We demonstrate our acceptance of what Y'shua did for us by becoming a Torah observant, law abiding people. That is the meaning of the Scripture when Y'shua teaches:

"Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened to you. For anyone that asks will receive, and that seeks, will find. And to him that knocks, it will be opened to him. Or whom among you fathers if his son asks of him for bread, why to him would hold out a rock? And if he asks a fish of him, why to him would hold out a snake? And if, therefore, you who are imperfect know to give good gifts to your sons, how so much more your Father who is in heaven will give good to those that ask Him. All that which you desire that the sons of men should do for you, also like this you do to them. This is for Torah and the prophets. Enter by the straight door, for wide is the door and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many are they, those that go in it" (Matthew 7:7-13).

Most people understand how the Gospel works, but here's a small example: Early in our children's lives, we explain to them the cause and effect of good and evil. For instance, we teach them that lying is wrong and that, if the behavior continues, it can destroy their lives. After that, we praise them when they try to behave properly, and punish them whenever they misbehave or fail in their efforts to always tell the truth. Obviously, it is inconceivable to punish a child every time they fail, especially if it is evident that they are genuinely sorry and regret what they did. So instead, we continue to reinforce proper behavior and hug our children and love them even when they fail, and explain that we, too, occasionally failed to "be good" when we were children, because we all have to go through a learning process. The end result of this learning process in the lives of our children is that one day they will realize on their own that lying brings destruction, curses and shame, and it puts them in disfavor with YHWH and others because YHWH hates liars.

This is essentially what YHWH did for us through Mashiyach: Although He had every right to punish us for our disobedience, He chose not to. Instead, after the "Fall" He saw our need as His children to be instructed in righteousness and to be loved and taught. Therefore, He sent His only Son, Mashiyach Y'shua, to teach us face-to-face, personally demonstrating how to keep Torah and walk according to YHWH's will. Y'shua demonstrated perfect patience and love towards YHWH's creation before pouring out his own life as the Final Sin Sacrifice – which forever abolished the need for mankind to kill an innocent animal to atone for our sins. Thus, Law and Grace have been applied in a functional way so that all YHWH's children understand the cause and effect of sin and righteousness.

YHWH's Good News (Gospel) is the Way of Truth which is a continuum of truth revealed of YHWH's intent to redeem fallen man. This plan of redemption is what provided protection to Cain after he killed Abel, when YHWH showed great Grace to Cain after he murdered his brother. It was haSatan who had put the envy, hatred, evil imaginations and jealousy in Cain's mind against his brother. The Law at that time was a spiritual consciousness, and Cain knew that he had committed murder by acting out very wicked thoughts about his brother. Fortunately for Cain, the applied Gospel kept YHWH from killing him, and ultimately also kept him from being killed by others.

In Noah's days evil was rampant upon the Earth, much like today, and the Gospel went something like this: Get on the boat, or you'll have to tread water for 150 days without food or fresh water… will you receive "the Gospel" and get on the boat? The Good News applied was that Noah invested 100 years of his life building a big boat. Within that span of time every human being on Earth would have heard of YHWH's intentions to flood the Earth – but of, course, the "riff raff" scorned and mocked the Gospel of Noah….

Abraham and the men of his household agreed to be circumcised and enter into Covenant with YHWH. The Gospel went like this: There is ONE ELOHIM, whose Name is YHWH; either accept the Covenant of Promise or you will not receive YHWH's blessing. Circumcision symbolizes the separation of good from evil as a part of the flesh is cut away. *"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and **they shall keep the way of YHWH**, to do justice and judgment; that YHWH may bring upon Abraham that which he has spoken of him"* (Genesis 18:19).

Mashiyach's followers were referred to as those of ***the WAY!*** Peter issues a clear warning when he said: "*For it would have been better for them not to have known **the way** of righteousness, than after having known it, to turn back from the Set Apart Commandment that was delivered to them"* (2 Peter 2:21). The Gospel and "the Way of righteousness" are synonymous with the Kingdom of Elohim which advocates individual personal responsibility to uphold Torah observant, righteous conduct.

Moshe received "Ten Commandments" written by the *Finger of Elohim*, but if you went your own way and kindled a fire on Shabbat or ate barbecued pork, you were "cut off" (killed) because YHWH gave us all the choice to either follow or ignore Him. That was the Gospel according to YHWH revealed by Moshe. As a sovereign individual you can choose life or death by your obedience or disobedience; not by a cerebral theology that makes you "acceptable." Moshe preached the Gospel to all the Israelites; however, in the course of time the Levites (leadership) turned away from YHWH: *"But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the Torah; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says YHWH of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law"* (Malachi 2:8, 9).

Without "the Law" (Torah) there is no Gospel. Torah reveals and defines good from evil and reveals the elements of Covenant. About 6,000 years of human experience on this planet witnesses that YHWH's Laws are Set Apart and Just. YHWH's Law provides the parameters for Freedom, Peace, Justice, Judgment, Equality, protection of personal liberty and property and

the protection of the sovereignty of each individual. To pit the Law against the Gospel is a false Gospel as Rav Shaul teaches:

"I am stunned into silence, as if dead, that you have so quickly forgotten Mashiyach who has called you to his grace and gone to another gospel that is non-existent, but there are men who agitated you and desired to pervert the Gospel of Mashiyach. For if us, or even an angel from heaven, preach outside from what was preached to you, let them be cursed. As I said before, so I say again: Whichever man preaches to you outside of what you have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-10).

Nearly all Christian denominations ply the term "legalism" against others in one form or another. However, the second definition of legalism is the "Doctrine of Justification by Works." Essentially any Christian who does "good works" could be disgraced as a legalist; the intentions of their hearts being judged by the naysayer as though their "good works" are done for "justification" or salvation. Rav Shaul (Paul) put it this way: *"Who are you to judge another man's servant?"* **(**Romans 14:4**)**

The religious stance is that you can do nothing to bring about justification or righteousness for yourself, but in reality, Salvation isn't a mindset as much as it is a lifestyle, and a transformation from a carnal to a spiritual man. Salvation comes about by being conformed into the Image of Elohim. Each soul must co-labor with Mashiyach for salvation which must be evidenced in this lifetime, in the here and now; the work or service "of the heart" is to guard the heart and mind from degradation or backsliding into a carnal, worldly lifestyle. It is ironic that the individual who Gentile Christians have discredited for bringing an end to Torah was thus spoken of: *"you yourself also walk orderly, and keep the Torah"* (Acts 21:24). Paul the Apostle emphatically lived and taught the importance of Torah being written upon the heart!

The dilemma many Christians face is what to do when they discover their church hierarchy has been promoting a doctrine of demons by teaching against Torah. What can be done when Christians point their fingers and call you a legalist for desiring to live according to the Word of the Living Elohim? In reality it is the power of Grace that strengthens each soul to cease from breaking Torah and to stand up for what is right. The religious power of the word "legalism" is simply designed to keep souls in bondage to false religion and keep them from leaving the comforts of "the church," but there is a huge gulf between being imbedded in a church and being embedded in the Kingdom of Elohim! Apostle Paul taught: *"As a result, Torah is Set Apart; and the Commandment is Set Apart, and righteous, and good"* (Romans 7:12).

Christians who are often quick to condemn others as "legalists" have never learned the most rudimentary principles of Torah. It was the pre-incarnate Mashiyach who said: *"If you shall hearken unto the voice of YHWH your Elohim, to keep His commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the Torah, and if you turn unto YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul. For this commandment which I command you this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it. See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command you this day to love YHWH your Elohim, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply: and YHWH your Elohim shall bless you in the land where you are going to possess it. But if your heart turn away, so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away, and worship other elohim, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that you shall surely perish, and that you shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither you pass over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live: That you may love YHWH your Elohim, and that you may obey his voice, and*

that you may cleave unto him: for he is your life, and the length of your days: that you may dwell in the land which YHWH swore unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them" (D'varim/Deuteronomy 30:10-20).

Torah is freedom. We are either walking in Torah and are free from sin, or breaking Torah and are in bondage to sin. All the religious posturing and propaganda in the world has NEVER and could NEVER substitute for truth and righteousness.

The fourth definition of legalism according to the Oxford dictionary is "a formula" which is defined as: *a set form of words, or something definite or authoritative, or a procedure to be followed or something prescribed for a specific occasion.* Interestingly, this describes the basic thrust of the "statement of faith" issued by most denominational churches, does it not? This fourth definition simply suggests that one denomination's (or person's) formula is better than yours. All preachers have their own "formulas" – the fact that they would preach, hold a "service" or teach others simply means they have their own model of belief, or "formula." Most theologians have received their credentials from some university so they can "authoritatively teach" denominational formulae. If someone asks, "What must I do to be saved?" any answer could be construed as a "formula." So, in reality, those who point fingers at your "formula" as "legalism" are simply suggesting that their formula is better than yours.

Finally we come to "red tape" as the fifth definition of "legalism." Traditionally, official Vatican documents were bound in red cloth tape, and this is also where the 17th to 18th Century British Monarchy derived their government tradition. During the Fourth Century, the Roman Empire was "made Christian." Rome was the "superpower" that controlled all religious and governmental matters and Rome invented her own anti-Torah, anti-Semitic and anti-Mashiyach "Christianity." However the Apostle Paul had issued a very strict warning 275 years before the Nicene Creed:

"For the mystery of iniquity does already work: only he who now will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Master shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause Elohim shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12).

The applied thinking of the term "legalism" within Christianity epitomizes the work of the "mystery of iniquity." There is no better way to define man's religion than "red tape." Religion is man's carnal response to YHWH; it makes rules, traditions, buzz words, status quo trends and puts walls between YHWH and His people. YHWH sent Mashiyach to expose and take down the false traditions of man, but many love the bondage of religious traditions far more than they love the freedom of Truth. What Mashiyach did for us came at a very great price, and it is because of what he did that his followers become empowered to observe Torah by Grace, not of our own strength lest any man should boast.

All who point their fingers at others and call them legalists are showing solidarity to their own religious tradition. Condemnation of other human beings is, in fact, acting as haSatan's "little helper." Where did Christians learn this ministry of condemnation? *"For Elohim sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved"* (John 3:17). *"Judge not, and you shall not be judged: condemn not, and you shall not be condemned: forgive, and you shall be forgiven"* (Luke 6:37). Those who label people as legalists are simply asking for judgment to fall on their heads! See Romans 14:13; James 4:10-12; 5:8-11; and Isaiah 58:9.

MarYah

Andrew Gabriel Roth's "Path to Life" (www.pathtolife.com) amply demonstrates that MarYah is ***not*** a conjugation from the root "Mar". It is the Aramaic cognate and actual word for YHWH, and replaces YHWH 7,000 times in the Aramaic Tanakh; each time the Tanakh is quoted in the Aramaic NT it is YHWH who is the speaker. Furthermore, except for stating that YHWH is Y'shua Mashiyach, MarYah is ***never*** applied to humans. Much confusion exists on this topic, primarily because sometimes the plural form of "human masters" is spelled the same way. However, the verbs surrounding that word, plus traditional pointing, give us 100 percent certainty when the word spelled meem-resh-yodh-alap in singular applies to YHWH, and in plural applies to human masters. As detailed in "Path to Life" the conjugation theory (i.e. that the "Yah" is simply a noun ending and not YHWH) is completely disproved even by passages in the Hebrew Tanakh, cross-referenced to its Aramaic counterpart.

Mashiyach Ben Yoseph and Ben Dawid

"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,
I delight to do your will, O my Elohim: yes, your Torah is within my heart."
Psalm 40:7, 8

We are living in the days of Mashiyach right now. The Talmud states, *"All the Prophets prophesied only of the days of the Messiah."* (Bavli, Brachot 34B) The *"days of Mashiyach"* are past, present and future in each and every generation. Rabbis considered the Aramaic ***Nehora*** (light) to be a code name for Mashiyach; even the very first words YHWH spoke: *"And Elohim said, 'Let there be **light**…'"* (B'resheet/Genesis 1:3). The sages believed this was a reference to Mashiyach. *"And I will put enmity between you (the adversary) and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and you shall bruise his heel"* (Genesis 3:15). Rabbis understood the seed of woman was Mashiyach who was to crush the head of haSatan. *"And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For Elohim, [said she], has appointed me **another seed** instead of Abel, whom Cain slew"* (Genesis 4:25). Rabbi Huna stated, *"Elohim prepared another seed from another place, and he is the Messiah-King"* (B'resheet Rabbah 23).

Mashiyach is revealed in the ***volume*** of the Book, but it's not only the Scriptures that reveal Mashiyach. Every human evaluates life according to their world view and perspective of Justice, based on individual choice, experience and personal interest; however, all Justice and all "the common good" is the domain of Mashiyach. All form of corruption and all injustice are waged against Mashiyach; when mankind denies Torah and adopts his own justice system he puts himself at war with Mashiyach. Mashiyach is the intermediary between the Father YHWH (who is ein sof - without end) and everything in time and space. The Prophets of YHWH reveal two powerful opposing characteristics of Mashiyach: He was to be rejected and slain, and he is indomitable, whose government shall never end and who sanctifies haAretz (the land of) Israel. The dichotomy of such opposite characteristics caused the sages to conclude there were two Messiahs; one is known as Mashiyach ben (son of) Yoseph, the other as Mashiyach ben Dawid.

Mashiyach ben Yoseph

Moshe Rabbeinu wrote of Yoseph being cast into the pit by his brothers and then drawn out, foreshadowing Mashiyach ben Yoseph who was put in a tomb and then resurrected to life. Yoseph ended up imprisoned in Egypt on false pretenses and then brought out to reign over all the land. Mashiyach Y'shua has been "imprisoned" by a false religious system known as "Christianity" but he is also about to be discovered and revealed to his brothers. When Yoseph was recognized for his allegiance to the One True Elohim and recognized by his brothers, this was a foreshadowing of the beginning of Mashiyach ben Dawid and *acharit hayamim* (the end of days). Mashiyach

ben Yoseph is rejected by the kings of the Earth and most of his own people. As the suffering servant he came to offer the Kingdom of Elohim according to Judgment, Mercy and Faith; a Kingdom not of this earth, so that the Just should live by Faith.

The only prophet greater than Moshe is Mashiyach. YHWH chose Moshe to reveal the government of Mashiyach when He gave Torah to Moshe. The Mishkan (tabernacle) was constructed according to the Tabernacle in heaven, so that each component would reveal the attributes and character of Mashiyach. The *aron habrit* (ark of the covenant) in the *kadosh kadoshim* (holy of holies) reveals the Mind of Mashiyach; the table of incense, showbread and menorah reveal the heart, will and character of Mashiyach. This was done so that all who would follow Mashiyach could learn how to enter into the *Image of Elohim*; Mashiyach is the perfect Image.

Zechariah 12:10 states, *"And I will pour out on the House of Dawid and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication, so that they will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born."* The Babylonian Talmud Succa 52a / Yalkut Shimoni states, "This is Mashiyach ben Yoseph, who is to be slain." Rabbinical tradition rapidly digressed from a central Messianic character, to view themselves (or the Jewish people) as the "suffering servant" – which does nothing to satisfy the myriads of requirements of the "person" of Mashiyach ben Yoseph. *"As many were astonished (desolate) at you; his* ***visage was so marred*** *more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men"* (Isaiah 52:14). *"He* ***is despised and rejected*** *of men; a* ***man of sorrows****, and* ***acquainted with grief****: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was* ***despised****, and* ***we esteemed him not****"* (Isaiah 53:3). Mashiyach is very clearly foretold of suffering and being rejected and being "cut off." *"And after threescore and two weeks* ***shall Messiah be cut off****, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof [shall be] with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined"* (Daniel 9:26). Mashiyach was not only foretold of being "cut off," but Daniel pins down the precise timing of when this would happen. Mashiyach ben Yoseph presented an offer from his Father of the Malchut Elohim; in doing so he separated the "sheep from the goats."

Moshe wrote of Yoseph, who was the firstborn of Rachel, Israel's beloved. Yoseph, firstborn of Rachel, was greatly beloved of his father Israel/Ya'akov; as a matter of fact, his father preferred him above his brothers. When Yoseph was 17 years old he was the apple of his father's eye. Endowed to carry on the heritage of his forefathers, his own dreams revealed the course his life would take, but his brothers found him intolerable and wanted desperately to remove him from the picture. They threw him in a pit, but then brought him out and sold him into slavery to the Midianites, who in turn sold him to Potiphar. Later, Yoseph adopted an Egyptian identity, thus obscuring his Israelite heritage. What happened to Y'shua is strikingly similar: He spoke with an authority that caused his own brothers to be jealous and resentful. After being brought from the grave, a foreign people gave Y'shua a new identity that obscured his Jewish heritage and values. The majority of Jews can no longer recognize their brother in the Greek persona of "Jesus" as the God of the Gentiles. When Yoseph's brothers met him years later, they did not recognize him; he had to reveal his identity.

A seductress tried to tempt Yoseph into breaking his vows and disqualifying him as YHWH's chosen. HaSatan tried to tempt Y'shua into surrendering his "birthright" (Matthew 4:9). HaSatan offered the harlot woman of paganism – the Mystery Babylon religion, the perpetual seductress who heads up all relativism and syncretism to abolish Torah and Mashiyach. Mashiyach offers his Father's Kingdom of righteousness, justice and truth; these are two mutually exclusive kingdoms.

Yoseph was falsely accused for transgressing with the woman; he was imprisoned, yet there is no record that he verbalized a defense. Y'shua was falsely accused of violating Torah, but he

kept silent before his accusers. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 53:7-8 states; *"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare his generation?"* and Isaiah 53:12: *"he was reckoned among the transgressors."*

Yoseph's brothers slaughtered a goat and dipped his coat into the blood foreshadowing the offering of a goat as atonement for sin (Vayikra/Leviticus 16:15), which Rashi described as "A life for a life." Vayikra 17:11 tells us that *"the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement."* Here is a *remez* (clue or hint) of Yom Kippur and the second goat who was called azazel which carried the sins of Israel into the wilderness. Yoseph was innocent but his brothers sent him away into the "wilderness." Y'shua was innocent but many of his own people call him a *mamzer* (bastard) and a violator of Torah, yet through his own blood he made redemption and atonement for his people (extended family) who put their trust in him. Yoseph saved his family from physical starvation and certain death; in so doing the line of Awraham and the Kingdom of Elohim was advanced.

It was reported to Israel (Ya'akov) that Yoseph was dead and he remained with this belief for many years, until a much later time when he was reunited with Yoseph. Mashiyach ben Yoseph has been considered dead and separate from the House of Israel for almost two millennia, by most of the Jewish people. Y'shua gave many parables referring to this reality, *"…like a man who went on a journey. He called his servants and delivered his possessions to them… Now after a great time, the master came and received an account from them of those servants"* (Matthew 25:14-19). *"For it is like a man who went on a journey and left his house and gave authority to his servants"* (Mark 13:34). *"But first it is necessary that he suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Nukh, likewise it will be in the days of the Son of man. For they were eating and drinking and taking wives and giving them to husbands until the day that Nukh entered into the Ark and the flood came and destroyed everyone. And again as it was in the days of Lot, that they were eating and drinking and buying and selling and planting and were building. But on the day that Lot went out from Sadom, MASTER YHWH rained down fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed all of them. Thus it will be in the day that the Son of man is revealed"* (Luke 17:24-30). *"Behold, your house is left desolate. I say to you that you will not see me from now on until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of Master YHWH"* (Matthew 23:38-39).

While in jail on false charges, Yoseph revealed the fate of Pharaoh's Cupbearer and Baker, who were also incarcerated by Pharaoh. The Cupbearer and Baker each had dreams; the Cupbearer dreamt of a vine with three branches, and Yoseph interpreted the dream that in three days the Cupbearer would be restored to his office and would be giving Pharaoh his cup as before. Yoseph asked the Cupbearer to remember him when things went well with him and asked the Cupbearer to put in a good word for him with Pharaoh. Y'shua was three days and three nights in the grave before being revealed (Matthew 12:40). When things were going well Y'shua had many followers, but when he was arrested his followers forsook him; even Peter denied him three times. When the Cupbearer was restored to his office he forgot Yoseph.

Yoseph was an "insignificant servant" who was brought forth from obscurity (prison), but YHWH raised him up above the heads of the Egyptians and his own brethren, to sit at the right hand of Pharaoh. *"And the king said to him "according unto your word shall all my people be ruled"* (B'resheet/Genesis 41). Y'shua was put into the confines of the tomb and by death appeared utterly defeated; but he was brought forth from obscurity and raised up from death, conquering death, but also raised up to sit at the right hand of *g'vurah* (power) of YHWH. *"YHWH said unto my Adon, Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool"* (Tehillim/Psalm 110:1). Yalkut interprets this as "King Messiah." Y'shua states in Matthew 28:18, *"All authority*

is given to me in heaven and on earth. And as my Father has sent me, I send you." In another verse Y'shua states, "…*You have said it! But I say to you that from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming upon the clouds of heaven"* (Matthew 26:64). The Prophet Daniel thus describes Mashiyach, as interpreted by Rashi and Metzudat Dawid, as *"**Melech haMashiyach.**" "I saw in the night visions and behold, one like unto the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed"* (Daniel 7:13-14).

"And Yoseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me; Elohim shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace" (Gen. 41:16). *"Y'shua answered and said to them, Amen, amen I say to you that the Son is not able to do anything by his desire, but what he sees the things that the Father does. For these things that the Father does, the Son also likewise does. For the Father loves the Son and everything that he does he shows to him. And greater than these works He will show him so that you will marvel"* (John 5:19-20). Both Yoseph and Y'shua spoke on behalf of the will of Elohim. *"But he who does not love me will not keep my Word and this Word that you hear is not mine, rather it is of the Father who sent me"* (John 14:24).

Yoseph was given the Gentile name Zaphnathpaaneah which bears no resemblance to his original Hebrew name. Y'shua was given the Gentile name "Jesus" which also bears no resemblance with his original Hebrew name.

Yoseph was given a Gentile wife whose name was Asenath which means "belonging to the goddess Neith." Asenath was the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On, who was a sun worshipper. Y'shua was "given" a Gentile "wife" by an all-Gentile church whose founders were sun worshippers and pagans who "married" Y'shua with sun worship (Sun-Day, Ishtar, Tammuz etz).

Yoseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh. A man must be 30 years of age before officiating in the Tabernacle (B'midbar/Numbers 4:23). Y'shua was about thirty years old when he began to proclaim the Kingdom of Elohim (Luke 3:22, 23).

"And Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Yoseph, what he says to you, do." In D'varim/Deut. 18:15, 18, 19 Moshe states, *"YHWH Elohim will raise up unto you a prophet from amongst you, of your brethren, like unto me; unto him you shall hearken... I will raise them up a prophet from among your brethren, like unto you, and I will put my Words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my Words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."* Y'shua was chosen by His Father YHWH to bring Torah and the victory over sin to his people and then to all who would follow him.

Yoseph was given guidance by the Spirit to save people from starvation, from lack of bread. The prophet Amos states, *"Behold. the days come, says YHWH Elohim, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of YHWH"* (Amos 8:11). Y'shua brought the Word of YHWH to feed those who hunger for righteousness and the Kingdom of Elohim. Torah likens bread to the Word of YHWH: *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word which proceeds from the mouth of YHWH"* (D'varim/Deut. 8:3).

Four hundred years passed from Malachi the prophet until Y'shua's arrival in Israel. The nations of the world were immersed in idolatry; the Jewish people were enslaved under Roman occupation and many were becoming Hellenized, but Y'shua said, *"I am the bread of life: he that comes unto me shall never hunger. and he that believes in me shall never thirst"* (Yochanan/John 6:35). Y'shua brought many souls out of spiritual starvation and provided knowledge of Elohim to the Jew first, and then to the Goyim.

"And Yoseph knew his brethren, but they knew him not" (B'resheet 42:7). Yoseph was in full control of the situation. He recognized his brothers, but his brothers didn't recognize him. The

Prophet Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 39:23 writes: *"And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies...."* Y'shua stated, *"I say to you that you will not see me from now on until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of Master YHWH"* (Matthew 23:39). Y'shua's identity was foretold to be hidden from Israel, and yet all would have access to him and he would be known of them as coming in the Name of YHWH.

Yoseph imprisoned his brothers for three days; on the third day he called them forth (B'resheet 42:17-18). This can be likened to a passage in Hoshea 6:2, *"After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we will live in his sight."* This prophecy ultimately foretells a 2,000 year period which is near completion; the third day is the beginning of the third millennium of Mashiyach ben Yoseph (the seventh millennium from Creation). Since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD, the Land of Israel has been under the rule of Gentiles. Although the "Jewish" State of Israel was conceived on May 14th 1948, there has neither been a pro-Torah or pro-Mashiyach Jewish government. Neither have the inhabitants of Israel repented of the very transgressions which brought the Babylonian exile. Y'shua stated, *"And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away to every land. And Urishlim will be trampled by the Gentiles until* ***the times of the Gentiles*** *be fulfilled"* (Luke 21:24).

The duration of time between Yoseph being sold into slavery and when his brothers recognized him can be likened to the "times of the Gentiles." This era will be completed when Mashiyach is recognized by his own people as well as all the inhabitants of the Earth. *"YHWH has made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our Elohim"* (Isaiah 52:10). *"Behold, the days come, says YHWH, that I will raise unto Dawid a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, YHWH Tsidkenu"* (Jeremiah 23:5-8).

Yoseph answered the supplications of his brothers by supplying their needs, loading their donkeys with grain, even returning their silver to their sacks. This illustration of *chesed* and *chen* (mercy and grace) indicates that their redemption was not deserved on their own merits, nor could their lives be redeemed with silver. Although many souls in Israel do not live according to Torah or have faith in Mashiyach, YHWH is faithful to uphold His Word, *"for his chesed (mercy) endures forever."* The prophet Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 36:22 writes in regard to the regathering of Israel, *"Thus says YHWH Elohim, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my Set Apart Name's sake..."*

Yoseph warned his brothers, *"You shall not see my face, except your brother be with you."* Yoseph's intention was to gather all of his brothers together before him, while his true identity was yet hidden from them. It is prophesied in Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 39:28-29, *"Then shall they know that I am YHWH their Elohim, which caused them to be led into captivity among the nations and I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I will pour out my spirit upon the house of Israel, declares YHWH Elohim."* Yoseph recognized his brothers, but they didn't recognize him. Most Jews know little or nothing of Mashiyach ben Yoseph who is Y'shua; most only know a traditional status quo religious interpretation.

Ya'akov could see nothing good in sending young Binyamin to Egypt along with his brothers; he did not know that Yoseph was the one who summoned him. Ya'akov could only see evil and he was fearful (B'resheet/Genesis 42:35-38). The leaders of the P'rushim were very fearful of Y'shua: *"If we let him thus alone, all will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take both our land and our nation"* (Yochanan 11:48).

"And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Yoseph's house" (B'resheet/Gen. 43:18-35). Yoseph's brothers were at first very uncomfortable in his presence, in effect experiencing

their transgression. Y'shua said, *"If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no holocaust upon the face of their sin"* (Yochanan 15:22). Y'shua's ultimate function was to deal with the matter of sin: *"This is my blood of the Renewed Covenant, which for the sake of many is shed for the forgiveness of sins"* (Matthew 26:28).

In B'resheet 43:18 Yoseph's generosity was interpreted as a malicious plot, although his brothers had betrayed him and sold him into slavery; yet he repaid them with goodness. Y'shua taught, *"But I say to you to love your enemies and bless those that curse you and do that which is pleasing to those who hate you. And pray for those that take you by force and persecute you"* (Matthew 5:44). Y'shua did nothing against Torah or against his people yet he was ridiculed for breaking religious traditions and was considered a dangerous threat because like Moshe he brought freedom from the slavery of men and their religion.

Yoseph's brothers *"bowed themselves to him to the earth"* (B'resheet 43:26) which was a literal fulfillment of Yoseph's dream. Revelation 5:12 states, *"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."*

When the sons of Israel found Yoseph's silver cup in Binyamin's sack, they were overwhelmed with grief and tore their garments as their worst fears had come upon them and all hope seemed lost. Their father Ya'akov was still grieving the loss of Yoseph (his firstborn son with Rachel) and now Binyamin was put into jeopardy by Yoseph's brothers. The grief was beyond what Yehuda could bear and he began to express deep guilt and remorse when he stated, *"Elohim has found out the iniquity of your servants"* (B'resheet 44:13-16). Yehuda who harbored hatred in his heart toward Yoseph confessed: *"What shall we say unto my master? what shall we speak? or how can we clear ourselves."* Speaking of Mashiyach ben Yoseph who was pierced, the prophet Zechariah said: *"And I will pour upon the house of Dawid, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn"* (Zechariah 12:10).

Yehuda brought forward his long harbored anguish of spirit for his crimes against Yoseph and the deep sorrow he had caused their father. In full Teshuva he laid down his own life for the sake of his younger brother Binyamin. Y'shua said, *"There is no love that is greater than this that a man lay down his life for the sake of his friends"* (Yohanan 15:13). While volunteering his own life for his brothers Yehuda had not yet understood that YHWH had raised up Yoseph to redeem not only himself, but his brothers, his father and the whole tribe of Israel.

"And Yoseph said unto his brethren, I am Yoseph; does my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him, for they were troubled at his presence." In Matthew 24:30 Y'shua stated, *"And then will be seen the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land mourn, when they will see the Son of Man who comes upon the clouds of heaven with great power and glory."*

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried…" (B'resheet 45:1). Y'shua could not refrain himself but wept over Jerusalem, saying, *"If you had only known, in this your day, the things which belong unto your shalom (peace) but now they are hid from your eyes"* (Luke 19:41-42).

Yoseph's brothers see that it is well within Yoseph's power to take bitter vengeance upon them all, but Yoseph speaks tenderly to them, *"Please come unto me."* Similarly Y'shua's beloved talmid Yochanan writes, *"For Elohim did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to give life to the world through him"* (John 3:17). Y'shua says, *"Come to me all who labor and bear burdens, and I will give you rest. Bear my yoke upon you and learn from me. That I am tranquil and I am meek, and in my heart you will find tranquility in your souls. For my yoke is pleasant and my burden is light"* (Matthew 11:28-30). Mashiyach quotes this from Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 6:16.

Yoseph explains, *"I am Yoseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt."* He comforts his brothers by explaining that YHWH had made a way for salvation, not only for them, but myriads of Gentiles who were preserved from starvation. Yoseph's Master is YHWH, and what the brothers had meant for evil YHWH turned to good. Through these circumstances, the whole world heard of the Mighty One of Yoseph; YHWH's fame spread through Israel's descendants until YHWH rose up Moshe to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. Like Yoseph who welcomed his brothers into his home and served them at his table, Y'shua says, *"That you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom..."* (Luke 22:30).

Yoseph stated, *"Elohim sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."* Yoseph was the instrument YHWH used to fulfill the promise to Awraham of making his seed a great nation, (B'resheet/Genesis 12:2). Y'shua says, *"There are many rooms in my Father's house, and if not I would have told you so. For I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again for you and take you with me, that where I am, you may be also"* (Yochanan 14:2, 3).

After Ya'akov died (seventeen years later, B'resheet 47:28) Yoseph's brothers went to him to ask his forgiveness: *"Forgive, please the crime of your brothers, and their sin, for they did unto you evil: and now please forgive their crime..."* (B'resheet 50:15-21). Yoseph wept when they spoke to him. And his brothers fell down before him and said, as the Egyptians had, *"Behold we are your servants."* Yoseph answered them, *"But as for you, you thought evil against me, but Elohim meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day to save many people alive."* While Y'shua was on the execution stake he stated, *"Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34).

Although Yoseph's brothers had been made aware of Yoseph's true identity, seventeen years passed before an open acknowledgement was made. It is written; *"For the children will abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a zevach (sacrifice), and without an image, and without an ephod, and without t'raphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek YHWH their Elohim, and Dawid their king, and shall fear YHWH and his goodness in the latter days"* (Hoshea 3:4-5).

The sufferings of Mashiyach ben Yoseph pertain to establishing righteous judgments as a Servant of YHWH and in the Name of YHWH. *"And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had sworn a charge to the children of Israel, saying, 'Elohim will surely visit you; and you shall carry up my bones along with you'"* (Sh'mot/Ex. 13:19). Moshe was the one who carried the bones of Yoseph out of Egypt, which is a very distinct sign since it was Y'hoshua (the full Hebrew name of Y'shua) who succeeded Moshe. Here's the connection: Yoseph was anointed by the Ruach haKodesh to be a type of Mashiyach; then Moshe was anointed by the Ruach haKodesh, another type of Mashiyach; and then Y'hoshua was anointed to be a type of Mashiyach, BUT the name Y'hoshua IS the name of Mashiyach ben Yoseph! Y'shua is simply the shortened form of Y'hoshua! There are no candidates for the office of Mashiyach ben Yoseph who can even come close to Y'shua. Mashiyach ben Yoseph is not a prophetic "idea" or a theology; the reality is that YHWH revealed Himself through his "Suffering Servant" according to many prophecies including Isaiah 42:1-4; 53:1-12. Hidden in the Toledot (line of) Adam is the revelation of Mashiyach ben Yoseph as the suffering servant:

Toledot Adam
(*The Line or Genealogy of Adam*)

ADAM	Man
SETH	Appointed
ENOSH	Mortal
CAINAN	Sorrow
MAHALEEL	Blessed Elohim
JARED	Shall Come Down
ENOCH	Teaching
METHUSELAH	His Death Shall Bring
LAMECH	Despairing
NOAH	Comfort

Man (is) Appointed Mortal Sorrow, (but a) Blessed Elohim Shall Come Down Teaching (that) His Death Shall Bring (the) Despairing Comfort.

Mashiyach ben Dawid

The Jewish people have long understood that when Mashiyach ben Dawid comes, he will establish a righteous government in the Land of Israel and judge the nations with righteousness. Mashiyach ben Dawid will operate in dimensions that have not before been revealed to mankind to sanctify the Name of YHWH and harmonize all things to bring perfect Justice, Equality and Peace. The Prophets of YHWH have foretold this from Genesis to Revelation; it's not a matter of if but when. However, it is impossible to understand the office of Mashiyach ben Dawid without understanding Mashiyach ben Yoseph, the "suffering servant." Mashiyach ben Dawid is "commissioned" by YHWH through the servanthood and qualifications of Mashiyach ben Yoseph as there is One Mashiyach, not two. Through the perfect offering of love and sacrifice given through Y'shua, YHWH has now given Mashiyach ben Dawid the mantle of power and authority, and Mashiyach ben Dawid isn't coming to Earth on a colt or a foal of a donkey; he returns with an army of angels on a white horse and with an indomitable sword.

"And YHWH shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be One YHWH, and His Name One" (Zechariah 14:9). This, of course, refers to the time of Mashiyach ben Dawid when YHWH alone will be King. All humankind will one day recognize YHWH's Sovereignty and all will live according to His government of universal Justice and Peace. *"And the army of heaven followed him on white horses, clad in garments of fine linen, pure (and) white. And from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he could strike the nations; and he will rule the nations with a rod of iron; and he will tread the wine-press of the wrath of Elohim Almighty. And he has upon his vesture and upon his thigh the words written: King of Kings, and Master of Masters. And I saw an Messenger standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven: Come you, assemble to this great supper of Elohim; that you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains of thousands, and the flesh of valiant men, and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all the free-born and of slaves, and of the small and the great. And I saw the beast of prey and the kings of the earth and their warriors, that they assembled to wage battle with him who sat on the (white) horse, and with his warriors"* (Revelation 19:14-19).

The dream and goal of every decent human is for Peace on Earth and good will toward men. But the enemies of peace are many and the fullness of sin and unrighteousness is as it was in the days of Noach just before the flood, and the rebellious have long been asking for their day before the heavenly courts. *"You went forth for the salvation of your people, even for salvation with your*

Mashiyach; you wounded the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck" (Habakkuk 3:13).

"In many ways and many forms, Elohim anciently conversed with our fathers by the prophets: But in the ***Acharit-hayamim*** *(latter days), He has conversed with us by His Son whom He has constituted heir of all things, and by whom He made the worlds; who is the splendor of His glory and the exact image of His nature, and upholds all by the power of His Word; and by his Qnoma he made a purification of sins and sat down on* ***HaG'dulah BaM'romim*** *(the right hand of the Majesty on high)"* (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Modern religions have made Mashiyach out to be a politician, a relativist who "loves everybody the same" and who bends to the traditions and will of the rebellious nature of greedy men. There is a lot of talk in Christian and Jewish circles about Mashiyach coming to Earth and how nice and pretty everything will be when that happens – but the fact of the matter is, the coming of Mashiyach ben Dawid is in conjunction with the Day of YHWH: *"Woe unto you that desire the day of YHWH! to what end is it for you? the day of YHWH is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the Day of YHWH be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?"* (Amos 5:18-20).

Many look forward to the return of Mashiyach, but fail to realize what Mashiyach ben Dawid will bring is beyond the scope of any religious idealism; the installation of a universal justice system based on Torah will come upon the Earth somewhat like the flood in Noach's days. *"Howl ye; for the day of YHWH is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt"* (Isaiah 13:6).

Humanity and religion has given itself license to rebel against Mashiyach by fabricating all manner of counterfeit religions and by waging war against Mashiyach ben Yoseph. *"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my Set Apart mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of YHWH comes, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations"* (Joel 2:1, 2).

Ironically, there is Christian song of triumph based on this verse, but the religious fail to realize that they sing of their own impending destruction! The Mountain of YHWH is a Government which will destroy the hierarchy of the Beast; Babylon's mystery religion and all its daughters will be done. Many have been deceived into following religions that succumb to false governments because they've totally missed the point that following Mashiyach is all about following ***his*** government and ***his*** authority. Unfortunately, most Jews and Christians are very quick to bow to the false governments of the Beast and many even suggest that YHWH installed these false, anti-Torah, anti-Mashiyach governments which their religions require them to follow. Mashiyach ben Dawid will plunder all false governments and religions which will put many souls in a very tight spot; there will be multitudes and multitudes in the valley of decision.

"My son, fear YHWH and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change: For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knows the ruin of them both? These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment. He that says unto the wicked, You are righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him: But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them" (Proverbs 24:21-25). The anti-Messiah is both person/s and spirit/s who have no fear of YHWH and who have changed YHWH's Torah and recreated a "Messiah" who did away with Torah. Daniel foretold of this anti-Torah religion: *"And he shall speak [great] words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end"* (Daniel 7:25, 26).

Nearly 700 prophecies in Scripture are directed toward the Day of YHWH and the coming of Mashiyach. The prophets foretold that mankind will have snubbed YHWH in favor of relativism and tolerance of evil; this collision course with Mashiyach ben Dawid has been in the work since Adam and Eve sinned. *"For you are bound to hear of revolutions and rumor of wars. Watch out and do not be disturbed, for it is necessary that all these things happen, but it is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines and plagues and earthquakes in different places. But all these things are only the beginning of sorrows"* (Matthew 24:6-8).

We must never think of the truth of YHWH and His Mashiyach as a "religion" but as the only One and True Government of the Universe. When our leaders and governments go to war against YHWH and His Mashiyach, as they are doing now, we must not join the throng or a multitude to do evil. If we do not stand against all form of evil and injustice then we are effectively giving our consent to it; there is no middle ground. *"I know your works, that you are neither hot, nor cold; I would desire that you would be either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to vomit you from my mouth. Because you say, I am rich and affluent, and have no want of anything; and you don't know that you are helpless and miserable and needy and blind and naked!"* (Revelation 3:15-17)

Messengers (Angels)

The Hebrew ***malakhim,*** and Greek ***angelos*** both mean "messengers," and are translated as "angels" in most Bibles. YHWH created messengers (Psalm 104:4; 148:1-5). They were created as free moral agents (Job 4:18). The messengers of YHWH existed from the beginning of time; they were singing at the creation of the world (Job 38:7). While some view messengers as being of a lower status than mankind, Scripture says they are superhuman (Psalm 8:5).

In many places Scripture tells of messengers appearing and disappearing as YHWH directs. In Judges 2:1-4 a messenger of YHWH instructs the Israelites to make no covenants with the local inhabitants but to "throw down" their altars (idols). Exodus 23:23 speaks of YHWH sending "***Mine Messenger"*** before the Israelites, instructing them to break down the pagan images. Messenger is also a term used to describe any agent that YHWH sends forth to execute his purposes. There are ordinary messengers who courier information as in Genesis 32:3; Numbers 20:14; Job 1:14-15; 1 Samuel 11:3; Luke 7:24; 9:52. Prophets are referred to as messengers in Isaiah 42:19; Haggai 1:13. Priests are messengers in Malachi 2:7. YHWH sends messengers to bring pestilence, 2 Sam. 24:16, 17; 2 Kings 19:35.

YHWH employs messengers to handle some of the logistics of his government. The title of "messenger" does not denote their nature but their office. The Messenger of YHWH appeared to Abraham at Mamre (Gen. 18:2, 22; 19:1), to Jacob at Peniel (Gen. 32:24, 30), to Joshua at Gilgal (Josh. 5:13, 15); this particular "Messenger" is the Word of YHWH who is Mashiyach. The nature and importance of YHWH's messengers can only be understood in the context of Scriptures; the Bible provides many details designed to give us understanding of their roles in our lives. Their existence is implied in Gen. 16:7, 10, 11; Judges 13:1-21; Matt. 28:2-5; Heb. 1:4, etc. Although we are not provided a number, the messengers are extremely numerous – "thousand thousands" (Dan. 7:10; Matt. 26:53; Luke 2:13; Heb. 12:22, 23). They are also referred to as having various ranks in authority (Zech. 1:9, 11; Dan. 10:13; 12:1; 1 Thess. 4:16; Jude 1:9; Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16).

Messengers are spirits (Heb. 1:14), like the *neshama* of man, but not incorporeal. "Like the messengers" (Luke 20:36) refers to their duties (Gen. 18:2; 19:1, 10; Luke 24:4; Acts 1:10). We even see titles applied to them as "sons of Elohim" (Job 1:6; 38:7; Dan. 3:25, 28) and to men (Luke 3:38), which indicates an intimate relationship between messengers and people.

Messengers are not considered perfect as YHWH is perfect (Job 4:18; Matt. 24:36; 1 Pet. 1:12), but they are finite creatures who may fall under temptation; and accordingly, we learn of "fallen angels" in Scripture. We are not given much information regarding the cause and manner of their "fall," but we do know it was based on rebellion against the Most High – even though it obviously happened to accomplish all of YHWH's purposes. We know that the fallen angels brought curses upon themselves (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:7, 9), and that they are reserved for judgment (2 Pet. 2:4).

Messengers never die (Luke 20:36). They possess superhuman intelligence and power (Mark 13:32; 2 Thess. 1:7; Ps. 103:20). They are called "set apart" (Luke 9:26) and "elect" (1 Tim. 5:21). The redeemed in glory are like unto the messengers (Luke 20:36). Messengers are not to be worshipped (Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10). YHWH clearly instructs that ***no*** carved or molded images are to be made of angels (Exodus 20:4; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 5:8); this also means ***no*** paintings of them.

Messengers are known as ministering spirits to the people of YHWH (Heb. 1:14; Ps. 34:7; 91:11; Matt. 18:10; Acts 5:19; 8:26; 10:3; 12:7; 27:23). They rejoice over a repentant sinners (Luke 15:10) and they will also be ministers of judgment (Matt. 13:39, 41, 49; 16:27; 24:31). Herein lies an item of rebellion with Catholicism and other Christo-Pagan religions which maintain that there is no harm done by graven (carved or from molded) images of "Angels" which is a direct violation of the Second Commandment. "*You shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth*" (Exodus 20:4). This Commandment is reiterated in the Renewed Covenant writings: "*Therefore we, whose descent is from Elohim, ought not to suppose that Elohim has the likeness of gold, or silver, or stone, sculptured by the art and skill of men*" (Acts 17:29).

Paul very clearly teaches against owning idols of Angels or "Jesus." Yet many Christians have idols of "Jesus" which are similar to cruciform fertility idols that existed thousands of years before Christendom. The ancient Ashurai religion has depictions of wings on their deities. The Ashurai also had a triune religion; their idols represented the wisdom of man, the wings of spiritual power, and the body of a lion. The ancient Assyrians carved wings on their deities and rulers to indicate their supremacy, which was hand-me-down idolatry adopted by Christianity. Mythological art from Nineveh suggests that wings represent the spirit. Nineveh's sculptors created some of the world's first pagan sculptures, which was their "modern art."

For many generations Christians have carried on a pagan tradition of owning idols installed in churches, homes, cars and workplaces. Many Christians use these figurines as "good luck charms." While they don't pray to these idols, they do give them power by expecting that good will come by having them around, which is pure paganism. Some Christians have dreams and visions of Angels and some believe they have met with Angels; but this does not provide license to make or own images, because this is contrary to the Word of YHWH.

YHWH's Messengers rebuke idolatry (Judges 2:1-4). It is a vile thing to make statutes of angels when the angels themselves have spoken against it. Those who follow Mashiyach must not own statues of Angels or Jesus. Anyone who is in possession of them is called to personally remove and destroy them. They are not to be given away or sold to others nor thrown away, but completely destroyed. According to YHWH and His Mashiyach all persons who manufacture and sell images of angels are rebellious; there are no exceptions.

YHWH instructed Moshe to place two kruvim (cherubs) with outstretched wings over the Ark of the Covenant, indicating YHWH's Messengers are over those who observe the Ten Commandments and walk in Covenant. However, manufacturing and purchasing images of angels is a direct violation of the Second Commandment; yet many Christians show no regard for this commandment. The Roman Catholic institution is the largest perpetuator of idolatry on Earth, using all manner of Christo-Pagan idols to entice souls into breaking YHWH's Commandments. The Bible tells us we are to flee from all form of idolatry. By making images of angels or anything in the heavens above, on Earth or in the water of the Earth, mankind is playing god.

My El! My El! Why have You spared me?

Matthew 27:46

Perhaps no Scripture evokes more emotion than the cry from the stake in Matthew 27:46. How is it possible that these powerful words have been misunderstood for nearly two millennia? For many, Y'shua's last utterance was either understood as a cry of desperation or a declaration of his Messiahship from Psalm 22:1; *"My El, My El, why have you forsaken me."* Greek versions attempt to transliterate the Psalm as *Eli, Eli lama sabacthani*. However the Aramaic Peshitta NT reads: *"Eli, Eli* ***lemana shabakthani,"*** while Hebrew Psalm reads: *"Eli, Eli* ***lama azbatani."*** Greek transliteration reflects the Aramaic word as does the Peshitta. However, there is a key difference between ***azbatani***, which only means "to forsake" and its Aramaic counterpart ***shabakthani*** which has multiple meanings but also includes the same concept.

Even so, does this mean Y'shua is quoting Psalm 22? To answer that question, consider these verses: *"And from that time onwards, Y'shua began to make known to his disciples that he must go to Urislim and suffer much from the elders and from the chief priests, and scribes. And he would be killed, and on the third day would rise up"* (Matthew 16:21). *"Behold, we are going up to Urishlim, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and to the scribes. And they will condemn him to death. And they will deliver him to the Gentiles, and they will mock him, and they will beat him, and they will execute him on a stake. And he will rise on the third day"* (Matthew 20:18-19). When Peter prepared to fight Y'shua replied, *"…don't you think that I am able to ask my Father to raise up twelve legions of Messengers? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled. Thus say that it must be"* (Matthew 26:53-54).

Y'shua informed his disciples that his death was inevitable, and that it would be fulfilled according to Scripture. Anyone who tried to prevent his death, even a loyal disciple like Peter, was referred to as being of haSatan! Y'shua knows that he is laying down his life as a voluntary offering according to John 10:11-18, but he can also take it back. He is referred to as the *"lamb of Elohim"* because the lamb submits his life unto death; a key requirement of Mashiyach according to Isaiah 53:7. Therefore, when Y'shua is suffering on the stake, he is fulfilling the very reason he came into the world – the suffering he could end in the blink of an eye, according to John 10. In this context then, with full power in him, the blessings of the Father, and YHWH's Messengers with him, he could not have, even for an instant, been forsaken.

When Y'shua was praying in the garden just before being betrayed, his prayer was immediately answered by YHWH sending a Messenger, in Luke 22:43, *"…a Messenger appeared to him from Heaven to strengthen him."* This being the case, we must look at the final words that come out of Y'shua's mouth; let's examine the Aramaic word ***shbakthani***. As mentioned above, it shares the "forsake" meaning with the Hebrew word used in Psalm 22. However, the root of the word ***shbak*** has several other meanings including: 1) reserve 2) keep 3) spare 4) forgive. In Luke 23:34, Y'shua uses the exact same word to say, *"Father,* ***shbak*** *(forgive) them for they know not what they do."* This multiplicity of meaning in Aramaic, naturally groups related concepts under the umbrella of the same word. In this case, *reserve, keep* and *spare* all are variations from the same concept of setting aside. The same can be said idiomatically of *forgive*, where offenses are metaphorically also "set aside." Conversely, the rabbis throughout the centuries have always translated the Hebrew ***azbatani*** in Psalm 22 exclusively as "forsaken." That is not to say the other meanings of ***shbak*** do not exist also in its Hebrew equivalent, because they do in other verses of Scripture. In the end only one solution reveals itself, which is that another meaning of ***shbakthani*** is intended. The context safely eliminates *forgive* as a possibility as it makes no sense; therefore, the highly similar concepts of *reserve, keep* or *spare* are left to investigate.

Some scholars have suggested that ***lemana*** could be interpreted as a statement and that would allow the first two definitions as possibilities with readings like, *"My El, my El, for this you*

have reserved/kept me." However, traditional understanding of this verse has always affirmed ***lemana*** only as a question. Therefore, what remains as the most viable reading is: *"My El, my El, why have you reserved/kept/spared me."* While all these possibilities will clearly work, the choice of Paul Younan (a foremost Aramaic scholar) is the wording, *"why have you spared me"* because reserve or kept has a connotation of a wider question that Y'shua is clearly not asking. Furthermore and in concordance with the other Scriptures mentioned, Y'shua is clearly aware of the reasons for his death, and therefore to use the other options would allow for inadequate options like, *"why have you kept me around"* or *"why have you reserved me for this purpose"*. Since he fully knows the reasons for his suffering, the preferred choice is *"why have you spared me"* or, "I've been here for six hours and will die for this cause, but how much more time will this take?" In response to this question Scripture tells us that Y'shua dies shortly thereafter, thus validating the context.

Finally, there is very good reason why tradition has been so strong on linking this utterance to Psalm 22. While Y'shua himself may or may not be quoting the Psalm, the rest of the narrative is clearly referencing it. This section of Matthew is a *Midrash*, or dramatic story rendering, of Psalm 22. The very rebukes found in the Psalm are on the lips of the Pharisees as they taunt Mashiyach (Psalm 22:6-8; Matthew 27:39-40). The Psalm references his *"hands and feet pierced"* and having *"enemies gamble for his clothing"* (Psalm 22:16, 18; Matthew 27:34). Even the probable condition of Y'shua hanging on a stake is described with phrases like, *"I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax and has melted away within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You lay me in the dust of death."* With all this Psalmic imagery, it's no wonder many have concluded with apparent logic that Y'shua is quoting Psalm 22:1! But we must also consider other factors; for instance: Y'shua was also experiencing brutal physical trauma, which is known to cause impairment of speech. Secondly, we do not have concise evidence to know whether Y'shua was speaking Hebrew or Aramaic at that moment, so even in the best of circumstances those who stood by listening may not have clearly heard what he was saying. In this matter, Hebrew speaking witnesses at the site of the execution thought he was calling on "Eliyah" as opposed to "My El." Perhaps it was only an exhalation of pain (Eli-ah). Altogether these criteria present a compelling case for determining how two similar phrases were transposed. In the end what we have here is another section of Matthew which "represents" rather than "quotes" from Scripture.

Netzer

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a ***Netzer*** *(sprout) shall grow out of his sheresh (roots): And the spirit of YHWH shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of YHWH; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of YHWH: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears"* (Isaiah 11:1-3). The word "Netzarim" is derived from the word "Netzer" in Isaiah. The Netzer represents the Kingdom of Elohim which is offered in Mashiyach Y'shua. These spirits (attributes) of YHWH are imparted into the souls of those who follow Mashiyach and permit the Ruach haKodesh to write Torah upon their hearts. These character attributes of YHWH are revealed by Mashiyach through the Torah (righteous instruction) of YHWH according to His Word. Hence the Kingdom is represented by a sprout that grows to fill the whole earth…which is why haSatan (the adversary) has counterfeited Netzarim Faith with all manner of religious substitutes and is also attempting to put forth an imposturous "one world government."

Y'shua said, *"I am the Vine and you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, this man will produce plentiful fruit because without me you are not able to do anything"* (Yochanan 15:5)

Aramaic *"shebista"* is the word for "branches"; however, the *Netzer*/branch of Isaiah 11:1-2 is implied. Netzer word-plays with *haNatzrati* "the Nazarene" and *haNetzarim*, "the Netzarim." Rav Shaul was branded a "ringleader" of the Netzarim: *"For we have found this man to be an assassin, and a mover of sedition among all Jews in the whole land: for he is a ringleader of the sect of the Netzarim"* (Acts 24:5). The Netzarim designation clearly implies the "Tree of Life" which serves as a reminder of the Eternal Kingdom that was offered to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The term ***netzer*** (sprout or branch) is also the root word for the City of the Branch ***Netzeret*** (Nazareth); *"They said to him, 'Y'shua the Nasraya.' Y'shua said to them, 'I am he'"* (Yochanan 18:5). The designation of "***Nasraya***" serves as a reminder to his followers, not that he dwelled in Netzeret but that his "dwelling" (the Spirit of Mashiyach) is within his people.

"For, if the first-fruits (are) Set Apart, then the rest of the dough (it came from is) also: and if the root is Set Apart, then also the branches" (Romans 11:16). This is the root of the Renewed Covenant that is altogether righteous, Set Apart, just and good, which is built according to the Spirit of Mashiyach that is the Word of YHWH which is forever revealed through the Father YHWH to mankind.

The Netzarim Faith is considered as a sect of Judaism in the First Century because it was originally sponsored only by Jews. The popularity of Mashiyach Y'shua was the impetus for the original Faith to be morphed into pseudo-Christian pagan religions. Polycarp and Clement were the only two post-apostolic writers who had met or known an original Apostle (Yochanan). Polycarp was extremely anti-Marcion, referring to him as the firstborn of the devil, he rejected the introduction of Easter into the church and taught that Christians must return to the Torah based *Pesach* (Passover). Clement stated that the book of Hebrews was originally penned by Paul in the Hebrew language and then translated into Greek by Luke. Both Polycarp and Clement voiced ideas that are quite contrary to what churchianity believes today, therefore their teachings were not so popular. The rest of the post-apostolic Gentile church founders never met the original Apostles and knew very little or nothing of the original Hebrew and Aramaic-based Netzari Faith. There is no mention of "the Netzarim" among the church founders yet they bother to mention the Ebionite faction that broke away from the Netzarim community.

Once Greek "New Testament" texts began circulating among Gentile theologians, each version became a self sustaining "holy book" according to each translator's opinions. Although the values of the Netzari Faith are clearly preserved in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts, concepts like having Torah written upon the heart (observance of Torah) is almost non-existent within the Gentile-based Christian religion which evolved in Antioch, Rome and Alexandria Egypt.

There has been a continuum of Netzari believers from the days of Mashiyach until today, but it has been an underground Faith that is largely scorned by Christian theologians and despised by Rabbinical Judaism. However, throughout history numerous church founders/leaders have publicly scorned Christian groups that observe Shabbat and the Feasts of YHWH and who followed a Hebraic rather than a Grecian faith. Rather than to test the ancient truths with a thorough investigation of the obvious evidences, most Christian theologians today are quick to voice all manner of polemic against the Aramaic and Hebrew primacy of Renewed Covenant writings.

The Netzari Faith very much upholds the unique sovereignty of every single soul. The *mitzvot* (Commandments) are the basis of Covenant that demands a response from each individual according to the *neshama* (spirit of man). The *Netzer* symbolizes each soul entering into their fullest potential with Mashiyach according to the Tree of Life. Judgment is a matter of how individuals have developed their spiritual man and used their respective unique talents and gifts. When a person chooses to follow Mashiyach, keep Covenant with YHWH and to obey Torah, they become free; no longer are they slaves to sin.

Mashiyach was not a pacifist but a revolutionary. He was tortured by Romans and put upon a Roman torture stake to show the world that nobody challenges Rome's hierarchy and gets away with it. Mashiyach's government is the only legitimate way of justice and peace on this Earth and it is the Netzari Faith that upholds the distinctions of Mashiyach's government, rather than just being another branch off the same man-made religious-political hierarchy that crucified Mashiyach. The Netzari Faith is making a rapid return to the Earth, and just as the Prophets of YHWH foretold, our numbers are steadily growing. YHWH has placed His called-out ones throughout the Earth for such a time as this. The followers of Y'shua Mashiyach will do valiantly and YHWH will most surely take back everything that belongs to Him.

New Testament Anti-Semitism

"New Testament" devices that breed hatred against Jews are plentiful; a very key phrase was even deleted from all Greek texts that clearly renounced anti-Semitism. But, it should be of no surprise that the Greek "New Testament" became the *tour de force* behind anti-Semitism when we consider the impact of individuals like Constantine, the Emperor of Rome and his mother Helena Augusta, who were champions of Christianity and also rabid Jew haters. The Nicene Creed of 325 AD was inked under their watchful eyes as they placed "government issued" edicts in official Christian documents that legislated acts of hatred toward Jews.

Gentile Christian Churches each had their own unique New Testament "holy books" with a wide variation of readings. As time went on, interpretive schisms between these assemblies widened in places like Antioch, Alexandria and Rome itself, breeding divisions within Christianity that would later motivate Constantine to standardize the "New Testament" throughout the Roman Empire. The cultural and religious animosity between Jews and Romans wound their way into nearly all the Greek Christian texts and their interpretation.

Many Christian scholars and theologians still consider Constantine as one of the all time greatest Christians in history, despite the fact that he murdered his own son, his nephew and many of his own family members, and wasn't baptized until he was on his deathbed. Other historians suggest that Constantine was simply a shrewd politician who saw Christianity on the rise, jumped on board, and used it as a platform to gain the much needed support that put him into "public office."

Shabbat

"*For from ancient generations in all cities Moshe had preachers in the synagogues that on every Shabbat they read him.*" Acts 15:21

Although Acts 15:21 indicates a direct fulfillment of Isaiah 56:1-9 showing that Gentile converts are observing Shabbat and learning about Torah and Mashiyach along with Jews, such things angered both the Pharisees and anti-Semitic Christians. The Shlichim (Apostles) fully expected Gentiles to be one with Jews in lifestyle and observance which is clearly seen in Acts 13:42-49; 16:12-15; 17:1-5; 18:4; and in Colossians 2:16, Paul even exhorts the Body of Mashiyach to refrain from allowing outsiders to judge them regarding Shabbat and Feast day observance.

Mashiyach is the "middle pillar" (Revelation 22:1-2) who establishes universal common good, but there had to be give and take on both sides. Jews from traditional backgrounds would have to let up on imposing their traditions; Gentiles would have to eliminate their pagan lifestyles.

For most Christians the Shabbat is thought of as a "Jewish thing" and as a major inconvenience, especially since the Church adopted Sunday, despite Scriptures like Isaiah 56, 58, 66 that foretell observance of Shabbat by Gentiles. On the other hand, because of Jewish rebellion against Torah, many Gentiles feel they are not called to observe Shabbat at all. To justify this, Christians quote

Scriptures like Isaiah 1:13 and Hosea 2:11 to show that YHWH was displeased with Israel's observance of Shabbat; and therefore many feel that they don't need to show honor or respect for the sign that YHWH gave between Him and His people (Exodus 31:13).

"But when the Pharisees saw them, they said to him, "Behold, your disciples are doing something that is not lawful to do on the Shabbat" (Matthew 12:2). Mashiyach never subscribed to rabbinical "Shabbat traditions." However, most Jews and Gentiles don't realize there are marked differences between oral tradition and Torah observance. For instance, using oral tradition, the Pharisees in Matthew 12, above, wrongfully accused Y'shua and his disciples of being guilty of "working" on the Shabbat. They didn't seem to realize there was no intent to *work*; rather, the disciples were merely putting grain in their mouths while walking together on Shabbat. Nowhere does Torah prohibit the picking and eating grain while on a Shabbat stroll!

Unfortunately, the traditions of the Pharisees often stand as final authority for many Christians. How ironic, then, that most Christians inadvertently continue the condemnation ministry of the Pharisees, but simultaneously also level their guns at other Christians who choose to observe Shabbat….

However, in contradistinction to the Pharisees' oral traditions, the original followers of Mashiyach recognized that Gentiles are called to observe Shabbat along with the House of Israel, as mentioned in Isaiah 56:6; 66:23; Zechariah 8:22, 23; Micah 4:2; Malachi 1:11. Shabbat is for everyone; it is not an exclusive Jews only Commandment. (See Exodus 20:10; Leviticus 25:6; Deuteronomy 5:14)

Sadly, the rabbinical "Jewish Shabbat" became the measure of how Christians viewed Shabbat; and, rather than entering into the Joy of Shabbat, most of the Gentile world has chosen to reject Shabbat, which fueled yet more "New Testament" anti-Semitism. YHWH and His Mashiyach delight in Shabbat; but the Christian theology that taught against Shabbat was clearly initiated by Greco-Roman post-apostolic Gentile Church founders and then fueled by early anti-Semites like Constantine who had Christians executed for observing the Seventh Day Shabbat.

Traditional observant Jews have concocted a series of "loopholes" to get around certain Shabbat Commandments. For instance, the tradition of Shabbat Goys (Gentiles) doing small tasks (work) on Shabbat, so that they themselves do not break Shabbat. The Gentile enters the home or property of the Jew to perform these little tasks – which is a direct violation of Shabbat according to Torah: No work is to be done within our gates (Ex. 20:10; Deut. 5:14). Another traditional "loophole" that violates the intent of Torah is the religious tradition of selling one's Chametz (leavened foods) to a Gentile before Passover – although Torah clearly states that the Ger Toshav (sojourner who lives among Jews) is to be instructed in the Pesach and invited to participate if certain conditions are met (Ex. 12:49; Nu. 15:16). These kinds of rabbinical traditions have helped nurture anti-Semitism by posturing Torah observance as being exclusive to Jews.

Not only is Torah broken by these traditions, but the harmony between nations and peoples is only worsened because, instead of upholding a universal standard for all souls, Gentiles are given opposing messages which separates them from entering into YHWH's Shabbat. Unless Christians are given opportunity to learn and do Torah and experience the bond of Love within YHWH's Covenant, it is impossible for them to understand YHWH's perfect will in Mashiyach, and that the Kingdom of Elohim is a continuum that began in Genesis.

Pertaining to the "law"

Mis-translations in the Greek New Testament texts were used to bring accusation against *all* Jewish people. Here's an example: *"But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels* ***pertaining to the law*** (*nomikos*--nomikov), *because these are unprofitable and useless. Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned"* (Titus 3:9-11 NIV). The Greek word *nomikos* is derived from *nomos*, and certainly translates as "pertaining to the Torah." However, Aramaic very clearly exposes a Hellenistic redaction here:

"But avoid foolish questions and genealogies and contentions, and the theological arguments of the **scribes***, for they are unprofitable and vain. After you have admonished the heretic once or twice, shun him, knowing he as such is corrupt; he sins and condemns himself"* (Titus 3:9-11 Lamsa). The word *sapra*, clearly designates "scribe" as opposed to Torah (*nomikos, namusa*). Here again is a prime example of how addressing a small faction of heretics was misapplied to Torah and the entire Jewish people! "The scribes and the Pharisees" denied Y'shua's claims outright. These scribes are also rebuked in Galatians 3 and 4 for putting fences around Torah.

But another type of "scribe" that clearly fits this rebuke includes the Evyonim or Ebionites (the poor ones). These were Pharisees who accepted Y'shua as Mashiyach but ultimately rejected all divine claims about him. Their dispute began with the famous circumcision controversy in Acts 15, where they ended up losing the debate. Twenty years later, the Evyonim broke off from the mainstream Netzarim movement and disposed all of the early books of the Renewed Covenant Writings except for a mutilated version of Matthew, which was heavily edited.

Circumcision

As shown in the Appendix entitled "Circumcision," Greco-Roman Greek New Testament writers twisted Rav Shaul into an anti-circumcision Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul of course levies no arguments against circumcision itself, but against the rabbinical traditions (fences) surrounding circumcision that would pressure an individual to conform to rabbinical traditions that make void faith and the voluntary intentions of the heart. One can easily imagine the acute nature of the conflict because at it's very heart are issues of identity and belonging. Those who were pressuring Gentiles to become circumcised were doing so to appease their own religious flesh. Rav Shaul on the other hand very definitively asserts that the faith component, Torah written upon the heart and trust in Y'shua as Mashiyach is what defines a disciple of Y'shua, not whether he is immediately circumcised after accepting Y'shua as Mashiyach.

The post-apostolic Church founders used circumcision as a "New Testament" doctrine to divide Gentiles against Jews. Modern secular society is also divided whether circumcision is a good or bad thing and those who hold doctrines against circumcision are quick to side with whatever "scientific evidence" they can find to suggest that it is bad. But again, it was the Spirit of Mashiyach who Commanded Awraham and all his males to be circumcised! Make no mistake about it, circumcision is a pain in the flesh and something that all adult individuals will not soon forget. The lessons within circumcision apply equally today as they did in Awraham's, Moshe's or Joshua's day and even moreso for those who know Y'shua and who intend to put away the carnal flesh to live according to the spiritual man.

But of course Rav Shaul was doing battle against religious pride and he never pulled any punches: *"Oh that those who are also troubling you would be expelled!"* (Galatians 5:12) As noted in the footnote, the Aramaic literally means would be "*cut off*" which, given the subject matter, clearly indicates that Rav Shaul was very strongly defending the position that trust in Y'shua is the essential ingredient to spiritual life, not the forces of tradition. Rav Shaul makes a very critical distinction that following Y'shua is not about making a broad sweeping turn back under the authority of a religious hierarchy, but to allow the Ruach haKodesh to write Torah upon the heart and be conformed into the Image of Elohim. And yet circumcision was painted as a "bad Jewish thing" which of course is a very low level religious assessment of the matter, when in fact it portrays an immutable spiritual component.

Rejection of "the Gospel" breeds Anti-Semitism

Paul said: *"But all of them have not obeyed the proclamation of the Good News. For, Isaiah said: My Master, who has believed our report?"* (Romans 10:16)

"All of them," refers to Jews as a race of people. Obviously, Y'shua was born the Jewish Mashiyach and myriads of Jews believed in him; but as a race the Jews did not. Paul lamented:

"*But I say: Have they not heard? And, lo, their proclamation has gone out into all the earth; and their words to the ends of the world. But I say: Did not Israel know? First, Moshe said thus: I will awaken your emulation by a people which is not a people; and by a disobedient people I will provoke you. And Isaiah was bold, and said: I was seen by those who sought me not; and I was found by those who inquired not for me. But to Israel, he said: All the day have I stretched out my hands to a contentious and disobedient people"* (Romans 10:18-21).

Unfortunately, it seems as though most Christians stop reading here, as though Paul had left the Jewish people in eternal condemnation. However, he went on to say: *"But I say: Has Elohim cast off His people? May it never be! For I also am of Israel, of the seed of Awraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Elohim has not cast off those His people whom He before knew…So also at the present time a remnant is preserved by the election of grace. But if by grace, it is not by works: otherwise, grace is not grace. And if by works, it is not by grace: Otherwise, work is not work. What then?... But I say: Have they so stumbled as to fall entirely? May it never be! Rather, by their stumbling, life has come to the Gentiles for (awakening) their jealousy"* (Romans 11:1-11).

Certainly as an entire race, the Jews did stumble; yet today there are more Jews who feel that Y'shua "was more than likely" Mashiyach than those who follow Orthodox Judaism.

"(For I want you to know this) mystery, that blindness of heart has in some measure befallen Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in" (Romans 11:25).

Paul expected the "blindness of heart" to be a finite period of time – and, of course, he took this from both Prophecy and personal revelation of the Ruach haKodesh. But then he went on to say: *"…in the Good News, they are enemies for your sake*: *but in the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake"* (Verse 28).

Although many traditions of the Pharisees oppose Y'shua as Mashiyach, this doesn't rule out the rest of the Jewish people. Not all Jews are Pharisees, but all Jews are "beloved for the father's sake." During the wicked crusades against Jews, the vast majority of Christians never had access to Bibles; they simply followed what their evil Popes and Priests instructed. It would have shocked many Christians to read: *"…beloved for the father's sake"* while witnessing the satanic "Christian" hatred against Jews.

The irony of Christian anti-Semitism is that the Renewed Covenant was made with the Jewish people. *"This is my blood of the renewed covenant, which for the sake of many is shed for the forgiveness of sins."* (Matthew 26:28) YHWH revealed the *Renewed Covenant* in Jeremiah 31:31-37 that He would, *"make a Renewed Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah"* (and) "*put my Torah in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts...* (and that) *the seed of Israel also shall never cease from being a nation before me for ever…says YHWH."*

Dogs and Pigs

"*You should not hang earrings on dogs and you should not place your pearls before pigs that they should not trample them by their feet and they overtake and wound you."* Matthew 7:6

The symbolism of the two animal groups could not be clearer: Dogs represent apostate Jews (Phil 3:2, 3) while pigs represent apostate Gentiles who rebel against the Almighty. The Kingdom of Elohim was never exclusive to Jews any more than it is to Christians. Whether Jew or Gentile, everyone gets to make individual choices regarding YHWH and His Mashiyach, who is no respecter of persons. We are all ultimately responsible to the Master for how we live, regardless as to whether we wear a Jewish or a Christian label. Hatred against others because of their labels or their race is simply the work of unclean demon spirits; only apostate souls exhibit this hatred. Those who are spiritually regenerated according to the Spirit of YHWH will bear no hatred towards another race of people.

Aristocrats Losing Control

"By the Jewish (authorities), five times was I scourged, each time with forty stripes save one. Three times was I beaten with rods: at one time I was stoned: three times I was in shipwreck, by day and by night; I have been in the sea, without a ship." 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25

Often when Paul refers to "the Jews" he is referring to a specific faction of people within the religious ruling class. Here, he indicts the religious authorities for their dirty deeds against him; he is neither charging a specific Jewish person or all Jews in general, which many mistakenly believe.

In Jerusalem the religious elite used the corruptible Sanhedrin to enforce their religious authority. Unfortunately, the ruling "elite" of most ethnicities are notorious for self-promotion at the cost of their own people; this isn't just a Jewish problem.

"And when it was morning, several of the Jews assembled together, and bound themselves by oaths that they would neither eat nor drink until they had slain Paul" (Acts 23:12).

Although Rav Shaul took severe beatings from religious factions, this never stopped him from pouring his heart out with love for his people:

"I say the truth in Mashiyach, and do not misrepresent; and my conscience bears me witness in the Ruach haKodesh; That I have great sorrow, and the sadness of my heart is unceasing. For I have prayed that I myself might be accursed from Mashiyach for my brothers and my kinsmen in the flesh: Who are sons of Israel to whom belonged the adoption of sons, and the glory, and the covenants, and Torah, and the ministration, and the promises, and the fathers" (Romans 9:1-4).

Paul offers his place in the Kingdom of Elohim in exchange for Jewish souls, so it's not likely that anti-Semites and anti-Torah Christians would fare well with the real Paul. But, this is also why religious Gentile "aristocrats" steeped in Constantinian tradition invented their own hybrid versions of "Paul the Apostle."

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Y'shua to the Praetorium and assembled against him all of the company of soldiers" (Matthew 27:27).

Anti-Semites would have you believe that a massive mob of angry Jews put Y'shua to death, but in reality the Praetorium only had a maximum capacity of about 200 people. The traitor and false witnesses had been arranged beforehand and the crowd had been stacked against Y'shua to unfairly influence the outcome. Roman soldiers were likely the largest contingent in the Praetorium, followed by a religious element of fanatics who where "yes men" for the religious elite. The religious element that was present did not represent all the Jewish people; these were men who wanted Y'shua dead because he threatened their political and religious strongholds.

Y'shua's Fame

Y'shua knew from the start of his ministry that he had one objective, which was to fulfill the office of Mashiyach ben Yoseph (the suffering servant). The spiritual forces that collided resulted in a violent cataclysmic impact that will not subside until Mashiyach returns. Through Mashiyach, YHWH openly staked his claim to all His Creation, and it is through belief in Y'shua for good or for evil that YHWH will set forth judgment toward the inhabitants of Earth. It's not difficult to imagine what would happen to any people group if a standard of Perfection was brought into their midst. There would be love for and hatred against the man and the Standard, but nothing would remain the same.

Y'shua walked among a people who were filled with every bit of reaction and emotion that was common to man. Imagine the contrasts between those who loved him and those who rejected him and wanted him dead. Jews had been waiting for Mashiyach for more than a thousand years, and no prophet, before or since, produced the number of miracles or spoke with authority like Y'shua

did. Therefore, it is no wonder that he is the most talked-about soul who ever walked on the face of this Earth. No other Jew begins to come close to his fame, and yet some "religious" people insist on believing that he died in relative obscurity.

The Netzarim community (followers of Mashiyach) was growing so rapidly in the months leading up to his torture and death that the status quo feared for their very survival because the Pharisees recognized that multitudes of Jews were turning to Y'shua. Witnesses record that as he rode up to Jerusalem the people couldn't restrain themselves. Tens of thousands of Jews were shouting "*Hoshiana*" (save us or deliver us) and when he went into the Temple, the children inside cried out: *"Ushanna to the Son of Dawid"* (Matthew 21:15). The religious status quo wanted desperately to wipe him out, but they couldn't because they feared the crowds (see verse 46).

A seed had been planted in the minds of many Jews that Mashiyach was coming when Herod set out to slay the newborns of Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16). And just as Herod was threatened by the coming of Mashiyach, so were the religious and political elite who feared losing control over the people. As a race, the Jewish people did not accept Y'shua as Mashiyach, but there were myriads (tens of thousands) that did.

Even before this event, Renewed Covenant writings indicate in numerous places that "large crowds" gathered around Y'shua. Because the crowds pressed against him (Matthew 13:2), on one occasion Y'shua was forced to *"sit himself on a boat, and all the crowd was standing on the shore of the sea."* Luke 12:1 states, *"And when a **multitude of many crowds** gathered, so that they trampled one another…"* indicating they couldn't begin to count the numbers of people who came to listen to him; yet traditional anti-Semitic lore teaches that very few Jews accepted Y'shua as Mashiyach.

Confirmation of Y'shua's fame is also evident when Paul went up to Jerusalem to meet Ya'akov; we read that *"myriads in Judaea believed and are all zealous for Torah!"* (Acts 21:20) Why would anti-Semites suggest that Y'shua died in obscurity when Scriptures confirm the opposite? Why would Christians "trash" the Torah when a myriad (which means at least 10,000) were zealous for Torah and following Y'shua under the direction of Ya'akov?

Who dun it?

Peter didn't mince words about who was responsible for Y'shua's death: *"...he, Y'shua, whom you delivered up and denied before the face of Peelatos after he saw it fitting to let him go. But you denied the Set Apart and Just, and you requested for yourselves a murderous man to be given to you. And that Prince of Life you killed whom Elohim raised from the dead, and we are all of us his witnesses"* (Acts 3:13-15). (Peter knew who committed the crime see also Acts 10:39.) HaSatan put the plot into the minds of the religious elite, but Peter continues: *"But now our Brothers I know that you did this in ignorance, as did your leaders. And Elohim, according to that which beforehand He preached by the mouths of all the prophets, that His Mashiyach would suffer has fulfilled (it) in this manner" (*Acts 3:13-18).

Peter had a very close personal relationship with Y'shua. If anyone had reason to accuse Jews it would have been Peter; but instead, he looked at the very souls who participated and said: *"I know that you did this in ignorance"* – so it is extremely odd that for nearly 2,000 years many Gentile Christians have held hatred in their hearts toward Jews. Many who have harbored hatred in their hearts towards Jews weren't even aware of it until they met a Jewish person and found themselves feeling defensive or uncomfortable without knowing why.

To indict a race of people for killing Y'shua is merely a diversion from the real purpose of Y'shua's life and death. Anyone who willfully commits transgression has, in fact, had a hand in putting Mashiyach ben Yoseph (Y'shua) to death. Mashiyach Y'shua's sufferings will, for all time, validate love or hatred within the soul for our Creator and toward all other souls who are alive now, who lived before us and who will live after we've passed on. Mashiyach epitomizes one

solitary soul who can come before YHWH and be true to himself without transgressing against perfection, or accepting the status quo as the measure of a man. Who killed moral Perfection? Only a fool would point their finger at someone else.

One Lost Phrase

"Behold, therefore, how much he suffered from sinners, for they were adversaries of their own soul, that you may not be discouraged nor your soul become remiss." Hebrews 12:3

Here the Greek redactor dropped an entire phrase! Greek reads: "*Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart*" (Hebrews 12:3, The Greek-English Interlinear New Testament, UBS 4th Edition, Nestle-Aland 26th Edition). Aramaic reads: *"Behold, therefore, how much he suffered from sinners,* ***for they were adversaries of their own soul,*** *that you may not be discouraged, nor your soul become remiss."* Obviously, this is *not* just some small omission! Consider also the poetry that was lost in Greek. Here are the original sounds: 1) kma saybar min khatayeh han***un*** 2) d'hanun hawu saqubleh l'naphshayh***un*** 3) d'la teman l'kh***un*** 4) w'la tethrapa naphshkh***un***. A beautiful message lost in all Greek versions. Y'shua states "***they***" were adversaries of their own soul. Perhaps if the translators would have retained the entire verse, there would have been less impetus for the evil Crusades against Jews!

Conclusion

Y'shua Mashiyach's life personified his Father YHWH, he said; *"But I say to you to love your enemies and bless those that curse you and do that which is pleasing to those who hate you. And pray for those that take you by force and persecute you. So that you may be the sons of your Father who is in heaven"* (Matthew 5:44, 45). Clearly, anyone who uses a "holy book" about Jesus to provoke anti-Semitism or bigotry towards another race of people are adversaries of the stake of Y'shua; *"For there are many who walk otherwise; of whom I have often told you, and I now tell you with weeping that they are adversaries of the stake of the Mashiyach; whose end is destruction; whose Elohim is their belly and their glory their shame; whose thoughts are on things of the earth*" (Phil. 3:18, 19).

Regardless whether a person feels justified according to a government (nationalistic) or religious mandate, no hate-monger or bigot will enter into the Kingdom of Elohim (Psalm 24:3-4; Matthew 5:22; Galatians 5:18-21). *"Therefore, by their fruits you will know them. It will not be that just anyone who says to me "My master, my master." Will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven"* (Matthew 7:20, 21). Anti-Semitism among Christians or "Believers" is evil; *"What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries unto me from the ground"* (Genesis 4:10).

Parallelisms

The Good News of Luke introduced us to basic Semitic poetry which permeates the first six chapters. One of the hallmark features in this Semitic poetry was the use of *parallelisms* of original Hebrew and Aramaic composition. In the Tanakh we often see these patterns as in the following:

- "*Keep my words and store my commands within you*" (Proverbs 7:1 NIV): This is ***synonymous parallelism***, which means that the second portion of the line echoes the first but uses slightly different terminology. In this case the synonyms are keeping words and storing them in your heart, the latter being a metaphor as mentioned in Luke. Here's another example:
- "*For a man's ways are in full view of YHWH, and He examines all his paths*" (Proverbs 5:21 NIV): The second part of the verse completes the first; this is referred to as

synthetic parallelism. Here the giveaway is that Elohim first sees and then He examines what was just observed.

- "*YHWH abhors dishonest scales, but accurate weights are His delight*." Proverbs 11:1 (NIV): This is called ***antithetic parallelism***, where the second part of the line clearly is in opposition to the first. Much of this next chapter of Proverbs contains this form of parallelism with phrases like, "*When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom"* and "*Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.*"

- "*Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave*." Proverbs 3:19 (NIV): This is ***climactic parallelism***, when the second line somewhat echoes the first but adds a little extra "kick" that puts an exclamation point on top of the statement. In this case, the way Hebrew reads here is that her feet go down to her own death in the first part, with the climax being that death also awaits whomever follows her. Again, all these poetic patterns, by universal scholarly opinion, point to Hebrew originality of the Tanakh verses; in this case from Proverbs. It is a distinctly Semitic fingerprint.

With this in mind, let's look at a few verses in 1 Peter:

"*For Messiah died for sins once and for all, the righteous and for the unrighteous, to bring you to Elohim. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit*" (1 Peter 3:18).
– **synonymous parallelism.**

"*For this reason the Good News was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to Elohim in regard to the Spirit*" (1 Peter 4:6). – **synonymous parallelism.**

"*Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins*" (1 Peter 4:8).
– **synthetic parallelism.**

"*Be shepherds of Elohim's flock that is under your care; serving as overseers, not because you must, but because you are willing, as Elohim wants you to be*" (1 Peter 5:2).
– **synthetic parallelism.**

"*Governors…are sent by Him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right*" (1 Peter 2:14). – **antithetic parallelism.**

"When they hurled insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats." (1 Peter 2:23). – **antithetic parallelism.**

"If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very Words of Elohim. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength that Elohim provides, so that in all things Elohim may be praised through Y'shua the Messiah" (1 Peter 4:11). – **climactic parallelism**.

"For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do--living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you" (1 Peter 4:3-5). – **climactic parallelism.**

Pole, the Standard

Although Christianity has long employed "the cross" as a symbol of Messiah's sufferings it bears neither Aramaic nor Greek support; nor does it carry the prophetic significance of the pole or stake which was the shadow of Y'shua's sufferings. The cross of Christianity was borrowed from the symbol of the Babylonian, then Greek and then Roman sun god, which was depicted by cruciform shaped buildings and graven cruciform images. Julius Caesar and his heir struck coins with symbols of the cross (solar wheel) to commemorate their sun god. The Roman Emperor Constantine was a sun worshipper who became a Christo-Pagan and advanced his version of "Christianity" throughout the Roman Empire. Constantine's version of "Christianity" included ongoing pagan cultural events that included Sun-day and Ishtar (Easter) worship. Christian folklore suggests that Constantine saw a cross formed by the light of sun which directed him to become a Christian.

From a Biblical perspective the Greek word "stauros" denotes an upright stake; the verb stauroo means to drive stakes. The Greek "xulon" denotes a timber or a log or any piece of dead wood. Bullinger's Companion Bible notes: "Our English word "cross" is the translation of the Latin crux; but the Greek stauros no more means a crux than the word "stick" means a "crutch."" Therefore, it is very plain to see that the departure from the original meaning occurred in the Latin language, as did many other pagan contributions to Western Christianity.

Both Aramaic and Greek agree that it was an upright stake or pole on which Mashiyach suffered, which is also seen by the symbol of the pole in B'midbar/Numbers with the use of the term ***nec*** (pronounced nace): *"And YHWH said unto Moshe, Make a fiery serpent, and set it upon a **nec** (pole): and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looks upon it, shall live. And Moshe made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a **nec** (pole), and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived"* (Numbers 21:8, 9). When mankind is "bitten" by the serpent (haSatan) of Genesis 3:15 we are to look to Mashiyach for healing and deliverance.

The Hebrew word ***nec*** (pole) is also used by the Prophet Isaiah to depict Mashiyach as a sign to all nations: *"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an **ensign** of the people; to it shall the Gentiles (nations) seek: and his rest shall be glorious"* (Isaiah 11:10). The pole or stake on which Mashiyach suffered is most certainly not the object of importance, it is simply the instrument of torture that received the blood of many people before and after his blood was shed.

Again the Prophet Isaiah equates Y'shua with the standard (*nec*) that YHWH has lifted up: *"Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a **standard (nec)** for the people. Behold, YHWH has proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your yeshua (salvation) comes; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The set apart people, The redeemed of YHWH: and you shall be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken"* (Isaiah 62:10-12). Mashiyach is the standard who is the salvation of YHWH and the goal of every true Believer who is born of the Ruach haKodesh. The prime Hebrew word for *nec* means to be lifted up as Y'shua states: *"And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to me."* (Yochanan 12:32).

In the hands of the post-apostolic founders of the Gentile church "the cross" became a license to break Torah without consequences. In reality Grace is the gift of the Ruach haKodesh that empowers followers of Y'shua to be set free from the slavery of sin. Grace is the empowerment to stop sinning and live a wholesome and righteous life in Mashiyach. A person who has not received Grace continues to break Torah; they are slaves to sin because they cannot stop and have no intention of stopping their sin. Those without Grace refuse to live according to the Word of YHWH, much like a smoker addicted to cigarettes cannot stop smoking, even though little

"voices" tell the addict that smoking brings hardship, cancer and even premature death. The "cross-ified Jesus" does not provide Christians the power to stop breaking Torah, because the Harlot Church system preaches a false Jesus that is strictly anti-Torah. One would never expect the board of directors of a cigarette manufacturing company to research, demonstrate and report to the public all the ill effects of smoking; neither can we realistically expect the Church leaders to take up the cause of righteousness and the importance of having Torah written upon the heart! As a matter of fact, theologians within the Church system are the ones who devised a "cross theology" which teaches that Torah was nailed to the cross, and insist the sinner who believes in "the cross" can break Torah without consequence. This is a very popular and convenient religious lie because it caters to the sins of the weak human flesh.

The Certificate of *Debts* or the *sins* of the repentant sinner were metaphorically nailed to the torture stake (Matthew 6:12, Luke 7:36-50, Colossians 2:14). The penalty for sin is, in fact, set aside only for those who repent and turn from sin, but YHWH's Word that requires punishment for sin has *never* been removed from the books. The will of YHWH and His Mashiyach is for mankind to stop sinning, but the will of haSatan is, and always has been, for mankind to ramp up all manner of sin which leads to destruction. This is the difference between "grace" and "license." "Grace" will find you guilty as charged, but your sincere repentance and efforts to turn from sin is rewarded with spiritual strength from Mashiyach. Those who look to Mashiyach are delivered and saved from the traps of haSatan who desires to seduce you into breaking Torah. "License" is the opposite of Grace; it teaches that a person who believes in Jesus can continue in sin and all the consequences of their sin are put upon Mashiyach so that the sinner goes free. This, of course, is the central theme of false religion and the root of all Christian wickedness.

For many Christians the symbol of the cross brings comfort even though it is widely believed to be the instrument of torture used against their innocent "best friend." The cross is also used by Christians to ward off demons; crosses are routinely placed where loved ones were killed and where they were buried. By doing so the Harlot Church has made void the Fear of YHWH and turned their version of the cross into a Christian icon and the license to sin.

The symbols YHWH gave His people are much different, however. For example, the Menorah is a seven-branched-lamp that represents the eternal Light of Mashiyach. The number seven represents completion and each of the branches denotes an attribute of the Spirit of Mashiyach that indwells YHWH's people (see Isaiah 11:1-4). The Ark of the Covenant is laid with pure gold inside and outside and represents purity on the inside and outside of each soul who is *in* Mashiyach. The Ten Commandments that are placed inside the Ark represent the Mind of Mashiyach, written by the finger of YHWH Himself, whose immutable Commandments will be used to Judge the whole earth (see Rev. 11:19). These symbols in the Temple represent the Government of Mashiyach that indwells the physical temple of each individual who turns to him, and are representative of the spiritual man. These eternal symbols are YHWH ordained, whereas the cross is merely a man-made icon. If Christians were to take the time to research the origin of the cross symbol they would be shocked and surprised to discover that it is far from what the post-apostolic church founders want them to believe; but these important elements of truth differentiate the One True Faith from the Mystery religion of fallen Babylon.

Prayer

The importance of prayer cannot be overstated. Y'shua prayed daily to his Father (Yochanan 14:16; 16:26) and he taught his talmidim how to pray and make prayer to "our Father" (Matthew 6:9). He taught his followers that we are created in YHWH's image, and that the Father is accessible to all who seek Him with a humble and contrite heart. We do not pray because YHWH needs to hear our prayers; He already knows our thoughts before we think them. We pray because we are the ones who rely on YHWH for life and need to maintain our connection with Him. It is imperative for us to invoke His Name in prayer because, without an active prayer life combined with a contrite heart and obedient disciplined lifestyle, it is very difficult to hear from Heaven.

We are called to be a Set Apart people because He is Set Apart – and this is done by welcoming His Spirit inside of us and having His Torah written upon our hearts so that we may live according to the Ancient Paths, also known as *the Way*. Rav Shaul exhorted the body of Mashiyach to *"pray without ceasing"* (1 Thess. 5:17) which can only be accomplished if prayer is a spiritual conversation.

The promise of the Renewed Covenant is to have Torah written upon our hearts. Torah is the Word of YHWH that dwelt among us in Mashiyach who represents the Spirit of YHWH, and who came in the flesh during the First Century to, among other things, teach his followers how to receive the Ruach haKodesh. The Word of YHWH speaks to us through Mashiyach who provides instruction, discernment and counsel to those who turn their hearts toward YHWH and pray and seek Him. Praise and Worship unto YHWH opens our hearts to hear His Word; our prayers help renew our spiritual lives each day so the Word of YHWH can become part of us while we become part of Him.

All the forefathers and prophets of YHWH prayed "without ceasing" through an ongoing dialogue within their spirits. But at special times the Word of YHWH appeared to them, or He spoke through one of His prophets to provide specific instruction. It is incumbent upon each soul to prepare their own hearts to hear from heaven; there are plenty of examples of formal and public prayer throughout Scripture to learn from. The prophet Daniel, for instance, prayed three times daily. He would face Jerusalem while he prayed, which shouldn't be of any surprise for those who know that Mashiyach is returning to Jerusalem. While Daniel prayed facing Jerusalem, he was clearly showing his allegiance to YHWH's government and to Tsiyon, which is both earthly and heavenly. The Messenger of YHWH called Daniel "greatly beloved" of YHWH and, of course, Daniel was afforded enormous insights into Mashiyach's coming.

Rav Shaul teaches about being *"ambassadors for the Mashiyach"* and he goes on to say: *"…it is as if Elohim was pleading you by us. In behalf of the Mashiyach"* (2 Corinthians 5:20). In other words, it is not flesh and blood that reveals Y'shua as Mashiyach but the Spirit of YHWH. The Word of YHWH and the Spirit of YHWH are also the Spirit of Mashiyach; they are descriptive names for the Arm of YHWH revealed. Whether one feels more acquainted with Mashiyach or the Spirit of YHWH, the point is that these are One. When Y'shua came to Earth in the flesh we were able to look upon him with our eyes and hear him speak as he revealed the Spirit of YHWH. Y'shua teaches: *"But when the Redeemer comes, He Whom I will send to you from the presence of my Father, the Spirit of Truth, He Who proceeds from the presence of my Father will witness concerning me"* (Yochanan 15:26). Notice that *"the Redeemer"* is also *"the Spirit of Truth"* – This is referring to the Ruach haKodesh which witnesses on behalf of Mashiyach; and Mashiyach witnesses on behalf of the Ruach haKodesh because they are one. Therefore, when prayer is made in the Name of Mashiyach Y'shua it is not so much that we are reminded of the flesh and blood of Y'shua who once walked on the Earth, but the Spirit of Mashiyach and the Word of YHWH who indwells His people.

In the last few minutes of his life Stephen cried out; *"Behold, I see heaven opened and the Son of man standing at the right hand of Elohim"* (Acts 7:56). Stephen and King David both saw

Mashiyach and the Right Hand of YHWH (Psalm 110:1-5); but then Stephen who was full of the Ruach haKodesh, prayed: *"Our Master Y'shua receive my spirit."* He certainly wasn't praying to the flesh and blood of Y'shua as this would have been idolatry; rather, he prayed to YHWH who is revealed in Mashiyach. If we study Psalm 110:5 from ancient texts we read: *"YHWH at thy right hand";* therefore, the revelation of YHWH who is *ein sof* (without end) is revealed to mankind in Mashiyach in such a way that mankind can have a relationship with YHWH through the Ruach haKodesh and through Mashiyach.

"And in that day you will not ask me anything. Amen, amen I say to you that everything that you ask of my Father in my name, He will give it to you!" (John 16:23) Y'shua did not come as a substitute to replace the Father YHWH; rather, he affirms the original Faith of Awraham and all the forefathers according the Word of YHWH as given in Torah and the Prophets. We have been directed by Mashiyach to ask YHWH *in* the name of Y'shua, which addresses not only the essential element of Faith in Mashiyach but the Nature of the Father YHWH who is outside of time. As we approach YHWH in the name of Y'shua, we accept the redemption YHWH provides through Mashiyach, but we don't pray to Y'shua because this is not what he himself advocated.

In Romans 7:14 Rav Shaul teaches that the *"Torah is Spiritual"* – it is the unceasing prayer within every follower of Mashiyach that speaks to us and guides us and shows us the Way of Mashiyach. Prayer is a dialogue, which means we must hear from YHWH; but in the Spiritual world mankind "hears" not with his ears alone or even his spirit, but through obedience to YHWH's Commandments. Y'shua said… *"The first of all the Commandments is "Hear O Israel. Master YHWH our Elohim is one"* (Mark 12:29). Simply hearing this Commandment audibly in no way satisfies the requirement; in reality the spirit of man must be conformed to the spirit of YHWH. When this Commandment lives within us then we have entered into the Word of YHWH which is Mashiyach. *Hear O Israel* refers to the Israel of Elohim, those who are alive according to the spirit of YHWH. *Master YHWH our Elohim is one* refers to the undivided authority and government of YHWH Who is given total authority to direct our lives and each step along our paths.

Prayer is life and connection with YHWH and His Mashiyach, which is why liturgy and the use of a Siddur (prayer book) are very helpful to nurture a dialogue with heaven. Most of the prayers in the Siddur are based on the Word of YHWH; they are simply arranged in a very specific way to approach YHWH with the great awe and reverence that is due to His Great Name. Meditation and study of Torah are very elevated forms of prayer and worship. As we study the Word of YHWH our spirits increase as if to say, "Hineni, here I am Father, teach me Your will." May our prayers be like David who prayed, *"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Torah"* (Psalm 119:18).

Priesthood

Many people look to Pastors, Priests or Rabbis to fulfill a "priesthood role" in their lives, these same leaders trust in those who mentored, ordained and gave them their credentials to perform their duties. Mentors and teachers are very essential, but when it comes to knowing YHWH and His Mashiyach each one of us is required to seek YHWH personally. But yet most people are a lot like the Israelites who said to Moshe: *"You speak with us, and we will hear: but let not Elohim speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for Elohim is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that you sin not"* (Exodus 20:20).

YHWH created us in His Image; we are each unique in spirit, soul and physical appearance because we've each been endowed with a portion of Elohim that makes us unique. Every individual also has a specific unique expression of Faith that reveals aspects of the Kingdom of Elohim to the rest of the world. Each individual has an inherent responsibility to YHWH and to each other, and each of us is uniquely judged according to what we've been given. While there is one Torah, one Mashiyach, one Covenant and one set of Terms and Conditions to the Covenant, we each express

our love, devotion and loyalty to YHWH individually. Therefore, it is extremely foolish to put all one's trust in the relationship that others (a priesthood) have with YHWH, instead of developing a personal relationship with YHWH as individuals. It is therefore a fallen and reprobate priesthood that makes people dependent upon itself, rather than upon YHWH.

Each person's gifts, offerings and prayers to YHWH are unique; they materialize through unique life experiences and personal identity to bring Glory unto YHWH. The problem is, religion has the propensity to institutionalize, categorize and restrict unique expressions of revelation and worship according to the hierarchy or status quo, simply because "the hierarchy" feels that it is sustained through it's own "authority" over the souls of others.

When the Israelites were offered a theocracy and the ability to live according to a Heavenly Government, they refused because they wanted a king in order to be like other nations. Yet from Genesis to Revelation the Scriptures indicate that YHWH's desire is for each soul to surrender to His Authority rather than to focus on an earthly priesthood. Every soul who acts in the capacity of a "priest" or "minister" is required to be accountable to both YHWH and His people, but this is often not the case. In most cases hierarchies are only accountable to themselves and the authority of their religious traditions. The oral law (Talmud) is a fundamental example of religious efforts to distill spiritual things according to institutionalized authority. The problem, of course, is that if the sage (wise one) was himself off the mark or his perceptions misunderstood to even a slight degree, then each generation of followers would obviously go farther and farther away from the perfection of Mashiyach.

"*And you have made them kings and priests to our Elohim; and they reign on the earth*" (Revelation 5:10). YHWH has revealed the destiny of those who live according to His Ways and, although it is a reality filled with wonder and beauty, it is also a formidable challenge to be Set Apart unto YHWH. *"For who has known the mind of MASTER YHWH, that he should instruct him? But **we** have the mind of Mashiyach"* (1 Corinthians 2:16). Each individual who intends on living in the World to Come must enter into the mind of Mashiyach; this is not something that can be done by other people for us.

"Whoever therefore is in the Mashiyach, is a new creature: old things have passed away; And all things are made new, by Elohim; who has reconciled us to himself by the Mashiyach, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:17, 18). Every individual in Mashiyach is called to become a servant (minister) of reconciliation, to the capacity that each one is called. Therefore, each must grow in Mashiyach to be equipped to help himself and future generations enter into the Kingdom of Elohim.

"But this is the covenant which I will give to the family of the house of Israel after those days, says Master YHWH: I will put my Torah in their minds and inscribe it on their hearts; and I will be to them a Elohim, and they shall be to me a people" (Hebrews 8:10). This is the Messianic Covenant promise that each one who enters into Mashiyach is called to experience; therefore, it is a tragedy to sit under any form of "priesthood" that resists the Set Apart work of the Ruach haKodesh that writes Torah upon the mind and heart.

If we examine both the method and lineage of the Melchizedek and Levitical priesthoods they both clearly point to Mashiyach. Both priestly lineages are reflected in Torah and illustrated in Bible prophecy. Melchizedek received tithes from Awraham, and therefore Awraham's descendants who became Levites also tithed to the original priesthood line from Salem, a.k.a. Jerusalem. This is also why Y'shua as Mashiyach, is a priest forever after Melchizedek.

Aramaic terms used in the Epistle to Hebrews exclusively reveal a priesthood that is not descended from Aaron's family line. Both priesthoods point squarely to Mashiyach; he is the Great High Priest who by his sufferings brought his followers back to the true Torah and brings glory to Father YHWH as Mashiyach ben Yoseph, the "first priesthood." During the End Days Mashiyach will appear as Mashiyach ben David, the "second priesthood" (Isaiah 66:1-24, Hebrews 13:8,

Revelation 22:14). As the revelation and advancement in YHWH's priesthood unfolds, there is also the expectation of advancement within human potential, but this dynamic progression within human potential will ultimately be resisted by the status quo religions which have engraved their institutional theologies in stone. The "old time religion" cannot change for fear of being shown as the false religion that it truly is.

Therefore Mashiyach promises: *"…when the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you in all truth. For He will not speak from Himself but He will speak everything that He hears. And future things He will make known to you. And He will glorify me because He will take of my own and show it to you"* (Yochanan 16:13, 14).

"And these things I have written to you on account of those who seduce you. And you also, if the anointing which you have received from him remains in you, you need not that any one should teach you; but as that anointing is from Elohim, it teaches you all things; and it is true, and no falsehood is in it. And as it has taught you, remain you in Him. And now, my children, remain you in him; that so, when he shall be manifested, we may not be ashamed before Him, but may have an open countenance at His coming. If you know that he is righteous, you also know that whoever does righteousness is from Him" (1 Yochanan 2:26-29).

Rabbinical Authority and Torah

When Rav Shaul discusses *"being without the Torah"* he clarifies that he is *"not without the Torah of Elohim, but subject to the Torah of Mashiyach."* Shaul rejected rabbinical interpretations of Torah and extra unscriptural "fences" around Torah that Y'shua didn't endorse. He has, by being "subject" to Mashiyach, transferred his allegiance from the Rabbis he trained under to Y'shua as final arbiter. If Y'shua and the Rabbis agreed, which they often did, then there was no problem. But if they disagreed, Y'shua's interpretation always overruled. This was no small admission at the time and very clearly brought Netzarim Jews into major conflicts with mainstream religion.

The idea that even one Rabbi could outdo all others was revolutionary, as the Talmud records the opposite scenario: "*My son! Be careful concerning rabbinical decrees even more than the Torah…the Torah contains prohibitions…But anyone who violates a rabbinic decree is worthy of death*," (Babylonian Talmud, Eruvin, 21b). In another place, Rambam's Introduction to the Mishnah, we read: "*If there are 1000 prophets, all of them of the stature of Eliyah and Elisha, giving a certain interpretation, and 1001 rabbis giving the opposite interpretation, you shall incline after the majority and the instruction according to the 1001 rabbis, not according to the 1000 prophets…Elohim did not permit us to learn from the prophets, only from the rabbis who are men of logic and reason.*" So we see that even if Y'shua was thought of as a prophet, rabbinic rules would still discount him and uphold traditions over what he taught. As the first and more ancient quote shows, to be in disagreement with rabbinical decrees was and is a dangerous business!

Because Torah was originally written in Hebrew and preserved within Jewish culture, many Jews and Gentiles assume the Jewish Rabbinate is subject to YHWH's Torah. Rabbis claim that if only one letter were to be removed from Torah, the Universe would cease to exist. Although this may sound very poetic, most Jews know nothing of "the Eighteen Emendations" of the Sopherim, or the "Severin" readings which show how the Rabbinate made substantial changes to the Torah to suit their traditions; not to mention the 134 places where scribes removed the Name of YHWH and installed the title Adonai. Torah has, in fact, suffered drastic intervention at the hand of the rabbinical world, which is functionally very similar to Vatican propaganda which also claims to have the only true interpretation of Scripture and god-given authority over people's souls.

The Severin readings showed up in Torah Scrolls that Titus pillaged from the Temple in Jerusalem (see Ginsburg's Introduction to the Hebrew Bible pp. 409-420). In many of the 134 places where

the "Sages" of old altered the Hebrew scrolls by removing the Name of YHWH, like in Psalm 110:5, these verses contain important revelation about Mashiyach. The rabbinical world does not accept Y'shua fulfilling the office of Mashiyach ben Yoseph, so they changed the Tanakh to suit their tradition and help reinforce their rejection of Y'shua as haMashiyach. But in so doing they also obfuscated the revelation of the nature of Mashiyach and brought curses upon themselves according to Deuteronomy 4:2.

Rabbinical authority is *not* YHWH's authority, but "rabbinical decrees" are based on traditions that seem right in the eyes of the "Sages" based on finite human logic and reason. However, they who are wise in their own eyes have and are breeding hatred toward Y'shua and all Jews who follow him. Within the Ketuvim (writings of the) Netzarim are many examples demonstrating how Mashiyach and his talmidim exposed the Rabbinate for sequestering the written Torah and then elevating Oral Torah (Tradition) as their own "in-house" authority, which the Rabbinate has collectively given itself absolute dominance. In Matthew 3:7-9 Y'shua states that religious Jews claim physical lineage to Abraham but this does not in itself provide right of passage into the Malchut (Kingdom) Elohim. Jew or not, every soul who will enter into Life and the Olam Haba (World to Come) must bear fruits of repentance according to Torah and have the Ruach haKodesh (Set Apart Spirit) operating in their lives. Mashiyach is the only connection between this world and the world to come; without Mashiyach Torah is simply words on a scroll or a dead letter or religious tradition. Mashiyach has always been the spiritual life within Torah. It is the Ruach haKodesh that writes Torah upon the heart whereas religion entices followers to love Torah from within a man-made religious authority. These are two very different worlds.

Certainly not all rabbinical tradition is in conflict with Torah; however, when it comes to Mashiyach, rabbinical tradition has superimposed itself as a "mashiyach" over the Jewish people. Rabbinical Judaism is sustained under carnal Government authorities that dole out salaries to Rabbis (in Israel), provide tax exemptions and kosher food taxes to finance rabbinical institutions. Regardless as to which "political party" wins the election, the government and "justice system" of the people retains higher authority than the rabbinical courts. The "secular" governments sponsor rabbinical Judaism and Christianity and Islam and New Age and occultism, and the sodomy agenda, and every pagan and anti-Torah, anti-Mashiyach institution that operates under a tax exempt status. Certainly Rabbis and other religious leaders want their followers to believe that they somehow "co-govern" with secular government, but the fact is that when the government "of the people" passes legislation that overrules the Word of YHWH, then rabbinical authority is helpless. Whereas Mashiyach *is* his own government and he judges both religious and secular "government" with the same set of rules….

Christians have also succumbed to rabbinical authority on numerous levels. Most Christians excuse themselves from observing Torah by claiming it is for "the Jews." Most Christians believe that Shabbat is for Jews but not necessary for Gentiles, which is actually a very rabbinical way of thinking. Christians who explore Judaism but choose not to convert are told they are Noachides. It is rabbinical invention that non-Jews are supposedly free from observing Torah, simply because they weren't born Jewish. However, YHWH clearly instructs that the *"ger"* is very much required to observe what YHWH commanded for all of Israel (Exodus 12:19, 48, 49; 20:10; 22:21; 23:9; 23:12 etc.).

The Hebrew word *ger* is translated as stranger, sojourner, temporary resident, alien; *toshav* also refers to non-Israelite souls and is also translated sojourner, stranger and foreigner, and these non-Israelites were and are definitely required to observe Torah and be part of the commonwealth of Israel. Awraham was a *ger*; he and his 318 trained servants were all *ger* who observed Torah long before there was such a thing as a Rabbinate. There are many Torah-based Commandments that Awraham and all his community observed before Sinai as *ger*; they were neither called Jews nor Israelites but Hebrews who crossed over from paganism into the Kingdom of Elohim. Torah

also states that an *erev rav* (mixed multitude) of souls went out of Egypt with the Israelites and, of course, they were required to observe *all* the Torah along with bloodline Israelites.

The Word of YHWH clearly teaches that drawing non-Israelites away from Torah is a false premise. Torah teaches that the stranger is to be refreshed on Shabbat along with the Jewish people: *"Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest: that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your handmaid, **and the stranger, may be refreshed**"* (Exodus 23:12). (Refreshed = *naphash* or "take a breather".) Malachi 3:5 states; *"And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that **turn aside the Ger (stranger) from his right**, and fear not Me, says YHWH of Hosts."* It is the right of every *ger* to be treated with honor and respect, and it is evil to keep Torah away from Gentiles. Torah and Mashiyach are synonymous and universal and, truth be told, most Christians are already observing more than 60 percent of Torah.

Rabbinical authorities invented their own "Noachide Laws" for Gentiles, which serves to bring Gentiles under rabbinical authority and prohibits them from observing Torah. In many cases Christians were observing Torah, eating kosher foods and beginning to observe Shabbat until they met a local Rabbi who persuaded them that Torah is for Jews only. However, both the Shabbat and dietary laws (clean foods) were clearly observed by Noah and no Rabbi has the authority to superimpose his own authority over Gentiles. Neither should Gentiles be foolish enough to accept any man who speaks against both Torah and Mashiyach. Torah requires that YHWH's people "***love the ger***" (Lev. 19:34; Deut. 10:19; Isaiah 56:6) and bring universal Justice to the world, rather than exclude people from Torah simply because they are not Jewish by birth or because they choose not to come under the authority of a rabbinical regime.

The majority of souls who refer to themselves as Noachides are ex-Christians who have abandoned the Harlot Church systems and Torah directives which are clearly established for the Ger (sojourner) among the Jewish people. However, YHWH also has something to say about this: *"Cursed be he that perverts the judgment of the **ger** (sojourner), fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen"* (Deuteronomy 27:19). Rabbinical Judaism perverts the judgment of the Ger (sojourner) by turning them away from Torah. The basis of all judgment is righteousness and the foundation of all righteousness is Torah. By withholding Torah from the *goy* or *ger*, rabbinical Judaism stands between YHWH's Creation and the Almighty YHWH who breathes life into the souls of every human being. The reality is that Gentiles who are drawn to Torah and who desire to live among the Jewish people are being drawn by the Ruach haKodesh of YHWH, which is very much the work of Mashiyach. The prophet Isaiah clearly foretold that those who are not Jewish by birth would keep Shabbat and enter into covenant with YHWH and be given a name better than the natural born Israelite sons and daughters. *"Neither let the son of the nekar (stranger) that has joined himself to YHWH, speak, saying, YHWH has utterly separated me from his people"* (Isaiah 56:3).

In Isaiah 56 we see a clear connection between these strangers and the strangers whom Awraham circumcised to enter into Covenant with YHWH. Make no mistake about it, these are people from all the nations of the world; Awraham's very name and purpose was given by YHWH as a "father of nations." *"And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any nekar (stranger), which is not of thy seed"* (Genesis 17:12). Awraham is a picture of Mashiyach; he represents the universal Kingdom of Elohim being offered unto all the nations of the Earth, and those who teach differently are simply workers of iniquity. Torah defines the *nekar* (strange/stranger) very clearly, *"Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the nekar (strange) gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments"* (Genesis 35:2). Is this not about as "strange" to YHWH as it gets? In other words, any Gentile or pagan has as much right to the Kingdom of Elohim as those who were Awraham's seed by birth, provided they repent and enter into Covenant with YHWH.

"And YHWH said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no nekar (stranger) eat thereof: But every man's servant that is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof" (Exodus 12:43, 44). The Egyptians were nekar (strangers) to YHWH while in their own land of Egypt but they were also invited to celebrate Pesach, provided they were circumcised. Therefore, it is a rabbinical religious lie that the laws of the ger only apply to those who live in Israel. Here we see nekar (strangers) who were previously devil worshippers who entered into the commonwealth of Israel and the Kingdom of Elohim by YHWH's own invitation! The fact of the matter is, just because rabbinical Jews have made Gentiles strangers to Torah, it certainly doesn't mean that YHWH judges Gentiles as strangers to Himself! We see very clear evidence in Mashiyach that YHWH is sorely displeased with Jews who prohibit Jews or Gentiles from entering into the Kingdom. Let's consider the punishment upon Jews who prefer to follow the traditions of men:

"And YHWH said unto Moshe, Behold, you shall sleep with your fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the nekar (strangers) of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our Elohim is not among us?" (Deuteronomy 31:16, 17) The fact of the matter is that Israel turned its back on YHWH a long time ago; only a very small remnant remained faithful. In Eliyahu's days there were only 7,000 men of all of Israel who had not bowed to Baal. In Y'shua's days Israel was at one of its lowest and darkest times in history. Synagogues were rife with assimilation into sun and baal worship, the Temple was polluted with money mongers ("businessmen") and politicians who were using "Torah" to pervert justice and abuse the poor. Rabbinical Judaism had many factions striving for dominant positions of political power. Y'shua summed up these rabbinical "authorities" in a few sentences:

"Woe to you scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrites! For you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven before the sons of men. For you are not entering yourselves, and those who would enter you do not allow to enter. Woe to you scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrites! For you consume the houses of widows, and that for a pretense you lengthen your prayers. Because this you will receive a greater judgment. Woe to you scribes and Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you traverse sea and land that you might make one proselyte, and when he has become one, you make him double the son of Gehenna that you are yourselves" (Matthew 23:13-15). It wasn't only that the Pharisees were shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven by turning Jews away from Y'shua; they had been shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven long before Y'shua arrived on the scene. Rather than helping the Jewish people find their way into the Kingdom of Elohim, they exalted their own false "Talmudic" authority which made void Torah in favor of their traditions; but they also turned the *ger* (sojourner) and *nekar* (stranger) away from YHWH!

Oftentimes Gentile converts to Judaism are more zealous for Torah than natural born Jews. Had rabbinical Judaism respected that the inner desire to observe Torah is the work of Mashiyach and made Torah attractive to Gentiles, there would not be the massive Jewish assimilation into worldliness, paganism and materialism. The world would now comprehend Mashiyach through the wisdom of Torah. Jewish identity and Torah observance would not be an inbred thing among Jews, but the nations would relate to Jews through their own roles within the Kingdom of Elohim. But of course Jewish identity has become the idol of most religious Jews who elevate and exalt the Jewish soul as G-d incarnate, and the vast majority of Gentiles believe that the Kingdom of Elohim has been stripped from the Jewish people because of their rebellion against Mashiyach.

"And Moshe said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would Elohim that all YHWH's people were prophets, and that YHWH would put His Spirit upon them!" (B'midbar/Numbers 11:29) YHWH desires all Jews to have a personal and intimate relationship with Him. However, rabbinical authority prefers that Jews have a relationship with their Talmud and Jewish Tradition

according to the rabbinate. Jews are taught to repeat traditional prayers day after day, fashioned by Sages; within Jewish religious circles are established peer groups who validate those who do the tradition and chasten those who don't.

Not all prayer is meritorious or beneficial. When prayer becomes an incantation or a mechanical rote exercise without *kavanah* (righteous/spiritual intent of the heart) it is as white noise and this Y'shua also taught:

"And whenever you pray you should not be like the hypocrites that love to stand in the assemblies and on the corners of the marketplaces to pray that they be visible to the sons of men. And truly I say to you that they have received their reward. But when you pray enter your inner room and close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret and your Father who sees in secret He will reward you in open. And when you pray, you should not be chatterers like the pagans, for they hope that by many words they will be heard. Therefore, do not imitate them for your Father knows what need you have before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:5-8).

Prayer is meant to be two-sided communication, but rabbinical authority elevates traditional canned prayers into deep mystical Gnostic absurdity, suggesting that the sound brings mystical power, which is simply a form of sorcery.

Without the intent of the heart, repetition of canned prayers day after day is little more than religious "self stimulation," but while traditional prayer lives a glorious life among the religious, spontaneous spiritual dialogue with heaven lives a wretched existence. A personal and meaningful relationship with YHWH is not promoted by rabbinical authorities because of the inevitability that a personal relationship with YHWH will reveal the humanistic, relativistic and materialistic state of the rabbinical hierarchy.

Observant Jews have succumbed to the fear of rabbinical tradition, which dictates how to pray, how to think and how to have a relationship with tradition. The knowledge base that most Jews acquire about Mashiyach comes by way of some sort of rabbinical authority. Precious few Jews recognize the nature of the Universal Government of Mashiyach as it pertains to both Jews and Gentiles, simply because rabbinical authority has made itself Mashiyach. This is, of course, the main reason why most Jews have not understood or considered the *Way* of YHWH's Mashiyach.

Rabbinical authority is yet another form of humanism that is based on elements of paganism. The carrot of rabbinical Jew-daism is Jewish pride and identity which is the marketing strategy that brings many Jews under rabbinical authority. But whether a person is Jewish or not, the important question is whether one is following Truth or the traditions of men. The Rabbinate has levied extremely harsh judgment against the Mashiyachship of Y'shua for nearly 2,000 years, yet any rebukes or reproofs of rabbinical authority are often met with a self-sympathy. The Rabbis are quick to cry out "self-hating Jew" when Jews reject their rabbinical hierarchies; or when Gentiles point out the futility of the rabbinical "priesthood" they are berated as anti-Semites.

Clearly rabbinical authority in the religious world is very far-reaching; both the Christian and Muslim worlds follow through with many religious ideals that originated from rabbinical traditions rather than Torah. Rabbinical authorities have paid money to and visited the Vatican to curry favor and recognition for their authority and, of course, rabbinical authority is financed by secular governmental authority. Many social, political and religious elements prove that rabbinical authority is contrary to Torah and has not been raised up by YHWH and His Mashiyach; therefore, rabbinical hierarchy that is based in Talmud must be disqualified as not being part of the Kingdom of Elohim. Therefore, YHWH's people are called to "come out of her my people" (Rev. 18:4) and not be part of what is an essential part of the humanism of Babylon.

If any credit is due to rabbinical Judaism for maintaining Torah consciousness, then credit must also be afforded the Christo-Pagan world for maintaining Messiah consciousness. However, those who are raised up by YHWH and His Mashiyach do not seek the praise of men, but the praise of Elohim. The Kingdom of Elohim is not of this world; all who follow Mashiyach and

sing the *Song of Moshe* (observe Torah) will find themselves caught between the two worlds of religious pride or suffering for bearing the infamy of Truth as they sanctify the Name of YHWH and His Mashiyach.

Rapture

The "rapture theory" teaches that "the saints" who are alive on the earth will miraculously fly to heaven either before, during or after a time of great tribulation on Earth. The main body of the rapture theory was invented by Ribera, a Catholic Jesuit theologian who published his work shortly after the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572. The blood of that horrific Catholic inspired massacre of French Protestants was still being washed off the streets of Paris when the Jesuits presented their rapture theory, designed to take pressure off the Catholic Church system that was being fingered as the Antichrist, the Beast, and/or the Whore of Revelation. To excuse themselves from this embarrassment the Catholic Church developed a "futurist" theology that suggested they could not be the Harlot Church who sits on the Seven Hills of Rome. They began posturing that Revelation speaks of "futurist" prophecies that are not yet fulfilled. (The head of the Vatican was so delighted with his massacre in Paris that he struck a coin to commemorate it.) Ribera wrote: "None of the wicked shall understand," yet thousands of "Bible teachers" today maintain that Ribera's idea of a future personal Antichrist is the right interpretation, and that the Reformers' view of the papacy as the Antichrist was wrong. From 1580 to 1830, the official teaching of the Church of Rome was that an individual personal Antichrist would appear in the future; while the Protestants held that the reign of Antichrist extended all through the Dark Ages, from the Fourth Century onward.

In the mid 1700's Emanual Lacunza, a Chilean Jesuit of Spanish descent wrote a book entitled, "The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty," which launched a theory that Mashiyach was to come TWICE; once for his saints at the rapture and then again with an army of his saints. But he also wrote that the priesthood of the Catholic Church would apostatize at the coming of the Antichrist and that the Antichrist himself would take over the Roman Catholic Church and persecute Catholics. However, Lacunza also yielded to one of the main contentions of the Protestants that the Antichrist was not a man but a system or body of men animated by one spirit. Lacunza had taken the Reformer's perspective and melded it with Rome's but, of course, this publication was immediately put on the Vatican's list of prohibited books – so, for whom was it written? It came with a commendation of being condemned by the Pope.

Lacunza also wrote his book under the name of "Rabbi Ben Ezra" claiming to be a learned Jew who became a Christian who was out to convert his Jewish brethren to Christianity. "Ben Ezra" became famous among Christians under the cloak of the converted Jew. Did Lacunza really expect to reach Jews by pretending to be an ex-Jewish Rabbi? No, because he was aiming at the Protestants. Lacunza was found dead on June 17th, 1801. There was no record of what caused his death, but after his death his book found its way to Oxford and Cambridge and into the library of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the official head of the Anglican Church and the people of England. In the course of time, the librarian to the Archbishop, Dr. Maitland, became smitten with the teachings of "Rabbi Ben Ezra the converted Jew," and the ideas of Lacunza the Jesuit rose from the dead and "ministered" to Protestants everywhere.

The Beast

For most Bible students it comes as no surprise that Protestant Christians fingered the Roman Catholic Church as the Antichrist Church of Revelation; especially when the Vatican extended extreme cruelty, torture and death to independent Christian minorities who refused Catholic "conversion." The Church of Rome continues to provide asylum for criminals and boasts extreme extravagance at the expense of the poorest of the poor while also being found to cover

up/minimalize the wicked sexual perversion of Priests who've raped the most vulnerable of society: children. The Vatican, which puts its official "Christification" on images of the sun placed behind the heads of many a "saint," epitomizes the marriage of paganism with Christianity, lavishly pouring condemnation and guilt upon its adherents and then selling cash pardons for "forgiveness."

Anyone visiting or viewing photos of the Vatican has likely noticed a massive obelisk at the center of St. Peter's square, which is dedicated to sex/sun worship. The massive eight-rayed sun wheel around the obelisk is the ancient symbol of Ishtar (Easter) who was a goddess of sex. The obelisk itself is a phallic symbol (penis) that was brought to the Church from Heliopolis Egypt by the Roman Emperor Caligula. Ancient pagan civilizations believed that the fellow who sported the largest penis was sent from the gods; therefore, Protestants pointed to the Catholic erection as evidence that Catholicism is in bed with paganism.

Caligula, according to historical sources, was a man of extreme cruelty, extravagance and sexual perversion who considered himself a deity. For public meetings he dressed up as various gods and demigods, such as Hercules, Apollo, Venus or Mercury, and he demanded that both the senators and people worship him as a physical living god. Similarly, the head of the Vatican also prides himself as "Vicar Christi" (in place of Christ) and operates under the title of "Holy Father" – which is much like the spirit of Caligula and a rather wicked thing in light of Mashiyach's warning; *"And do not call yourself Father for your Father is one who is in heaven"* (Matthew 23:9).

The Catching Up

"And then we who survive and are alive shall be caught up together with them to the clouds to meet our Master (Y'shua) in the air; and so shall we be ever with our Master." 1 Thess. 4:17

Here Rav Shaul teaches that the first resurrection and the "catching up" will occur at the return of Mashiyach. The survivors of the great tribulation are they who "survive and are alive" which was also witnessed (2 Peter 3:10-12) at the end of what is known as Jacob's Trouble.

Mashiyach says, *"Blessed are they who are meek because they will inherit the earth"* (Matt. 5:5). (See also Psalm 37:11; 149:4.) Isaiah wrote: *"And one cried unto another, and said, Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh, is YHWH of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory"* (Isaiah 6:3), which was echoed by Rav Shaul: *"For the earth is MASTER YHWH's, in its fullness"* (1 Cor. 10:26). Certainly the Earth is headed towards catastrophe of unimaginable proportion; but regardless of what man does to destroy it, it is YHWH's property and He clearly intends to redeem every molecule of it.

"For in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: wherefore YHWH blessed the Shabbat day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:11). YHWH calls *tov* (good) all that He created; therefore, fallen man's plans to destroy the Earth will come to an end long before the Earth does – which is why Mashiyach says, *"For then will be great suffering such as has not been from the beginning of the world until the present, nor will ever be again. And if those days were not shortened, not any flesh would live, but because of the chosen, those days will be shortened"* (Matthew 24:21, 22).

Rav Shaul stated: *"and then we who survive and are alive… shall be caught up together with them to the clouds…"* (1 Thess. 4:17), indicating this event is concurrent with the first resurrection and therefore concurrent with transformation from mortal to immortality. There is nothing particularly bad with picturing oneself flying through the clouds, but how far do Christians think they need to fly to get to their travel destination? Besides "Heaven" is not up; it is "in." There is plenty of Scriptural evidence that Mashiyach will take his bride into a new dimension of time and space; he will establish his Government over all the Earth and universe for the final Millennium (Isaiah 11:6; 65:25), followed by the resurrection of the wicked. Obviously then, the 1,000 year period is not "heaven," but Mashiyach reclaiming what belongs to his Father YHWH.

Although the rapture theory has gained wide recognition and acceptance in the Christian world, the word "rapture" like the word "trinity" is not found in Scripture. It is much more important for those who follow Mashiyach to focus on donning the garments of righteousness instead of supposing they already have all their facts straight. A future rapture is nothing but a clever deception of the enemy to make Christians think they've "got it in the bag," when in fact they are giving authority to the Anti-Christ Church by disobeying Mashiyach and Torah. It should also be noted that the "rapture theory" never penetrated the Church of the East; it is of Western origin.

The Promised Land

A very integral part of the Covenant YHWH made with Awraham included a "Promised Land." Undoubtedly, there is going to be a lot of scorched earth between now and when Mashiyach returns, but YHWH isn't nervous and Mashiyach isn't fearful. HaSatan knows that his days are numbered; therefore, it is utterly foolish to play religious games with "the Devil." We are told by the Prophet Isaiah that haSatan will be destroyed after he makes the Earth tremble and has shaken kingdoms and destroyed cities; but the irony is: *"They that see thee (haSatan) shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?"* (Isaiah 14:16) In other words, people will be amazed at how pathetic the chief of doom really is and they will realize the utter foolishness of even thinking that evil would triumph.

Rapture Not the Goal

The goal then is not Rapture (or religion) but Spiritual Regeneration, because the time of Ya'akov's trouble is coming for the benefit of "the church." Ya'akov had his name changed to Israel; Ya'akov represents Christians who are deceived and cheating themselves and others by not entering into the protection of the Kingdom of Elohim. Mashiyach Y'shua was put to death on the merits of religious tradition, but so is religion (false Christianity) putting Y'shua to "death" by turning their backs on Torah, which is Mashiyach preincarnate. The post-apostolic Western Church (inspired by haSatan) has always been at war with the true followers of Mashiyach but: *"Judgment begins in the house of YHWH"* (1 Peter 4:17, 18), so as the One World Government continues to rape and pillage the Earth of righteousness, one can expect even more false prophets to advertise cheap religious travel packages into the clouds. For more details on the historic background of the Rapture you may download a free brochure called "The Rapture of the Saints" at: www.netzari.org.

Rav Shaul (Apostle Paul)

Rav Shaul is often portrayed as the founder of Christianity, but in order to spin Rav Shaul into an anti-Torah Apostle, the post-apostolic church founders were left posturing him as a two faced sycophant: *"Then Paul took those men, on the following day, and was purified with them; and he entered and went into the temple, manifesting to them the completion of the days of the purification, up to the presentation of the offering by each of them"* (Acts 21:26). The post-apostolic church theologians claimed that Paul made a sacrifice in the Temple to win friends and influence Jews. But a decent person wouldn't want much to do with a two-faced man pleaser who used his religion like a "politician." Anyone who knows even the slightest bit about "sacrifice" knows that it's not the physical action that weighs in with heaven, but *kavanah*; the *intent* of the heart. Many prayers are offered during sacrifices that are combined with personal testimony and dedication, and one would have to be an extremely dishonest two-faced person to make sacrifice in the Name of YHWH for political reasons!

In Galatians 1:14 Rav Shaul states, *"And how greatly advanced I was in (Orthodox) Judaism, superior to most of my countrymen who were also my kin. And, in particular, how zealous I was with respect to the teaching of my fathers."* Rav Shaul also explains: *"I am a man who is a Jew;*

and I was born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but was brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamliel, and instructed perfectly in the Torah of our fathers; and I was zealous for Elohim, as you also all are" (Acts 22:3). To study at the feet of Gamliel was to rub shoulders with la crème de la crème; this was the highest rabbinical discipline on earth. Rav Shaul and his fellow *yeshiva bochurs* (students) would have memorized all or the majority of Torah by the age of 13. Their levels of discipline and observance would be second to none. Furthermore, Rav Shaul was neither ashamed of being a Jew nor of being a Pharisee: *"And, as Paul knew that a part of the people were of the Sadducees, and a part of the Pharisees, he cried out, in the assembly: "Men, my Brothers; I am a Pharisee the son of a Pharisee; and for the hope of the resurrection of the dead, I am judged"* (Acts 23:6). Paul never once proclaimed to be a "Christian," and he obviously believed that being a true Pharisee meant to follow the *halakha* (way to walk) of Y'shua.

Shaul knew that the religious labels people wear on the outside are not what defines the inside. Many priests and Pharisees put their faith in Y'shua for salvation, along with both poor and wealthy individuals. But the fact of the matter is that Rav Shaul was trained as an Orthodox (Pharisee) Rabbi and died as a Torah observant follower of Mashiyach. The stripes, beating and perils he endured at the hands of Pharisees were a result of his winning Jews to Y'shua. Not only was he winning Jews to Mashiyach, he was bringing Gentiles into a Torah observant lifestyle:

"Wherefore, Torah is Set Apart; and the commandment is set apart, and righteous, and good. Did that which is good, therefore, become death to me? May it never be! But sin, that it might be seen to be sin, perfected death in me by means of that good (Torah); that sin might the more be condemned by means of the commandment. For we know, that Torah is spiritual; but I am carnal, and sold to sin. For what I am doing, I know not: and what I would, I do not perform; but what I hate, that I do. And if I do what I would not, I testify of Torah, that it is right. And then, it is no more I who do that thing, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) good dwells not: because, to approve the good, is easy for me; but to do it, I am unable. For I do not perform the good which I would perform, but the bad which I would not perform, that I do perform. And if I do what I would not, it is not I that do it, but sin which dwells in me. I find therefore a Torah coinciding with my conscience which assents to my doing good, whereas evil is near to me. For I rejoice in the Torah of Elohim, in the inner man" (Romans 7:12-22).

On one hand Paul had anti-Mashiyach Pharisees trying to snuff him out; on the other he had Gentiles coming out of sodomy, polytheism, witchcraft and all manner of paganism who were learning about Mashiyach and Torah. Paul was feeling heat from both sides (because it is prohibited by Pharisees for a Jew to make Torah attractive to Gentiles); nevertheless, Paul taught that it is Spirit of Mashiyach in him who is observing Torah, that Torah is Set Apart, that Torah is right, that Torah works with his conscience assenting to his doing good, and that he rejoices in the Torah of Elohim according to his spiritual man.

"But you yourselves commit wrong, and you defraud even your Brothers. Or don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of Elohim? Make no mistake! Neither sexual sinners, nor idol-worshippers, nor adulterers, nor debauchers, nor liers with males, Nor the avaricious, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the Kingdom of Elohim. And these things have been in some of you: but you are washed, and are sanctified, and made righteous, in the name of our Master Y'shua the Mashiyach, and by the Spirit of our Elohim" (1 Cor. 6:8-11). Paul, who was clearly up against very high-handed rebellion against Torah, listed five out of ten Commandments for the Gentiles and warned that breaking these Commandments would keep them out of the Kingdom of Elohim. Corinth, at the time, however, had similar immorality to many Western cities that are known for prostitution, gambling, murder and all manner of criminal activity like today, and like today many Christians are expecting to get saved in their sins. Paul's misunderstood writings quickly became the "scapegoat" that post-apostolic Christo-Pagan theologians used to present a theological model of love and grace without indwelling righteousness of the preincarnate Mashiyach which is Torah, the Word of YHWH!

Paul the Theologian

Paul's letter to the Galatians is often referred to as "the Magna Carta of Christian Liberty," with the pinnacle verse being: *"Therefore you stand in the liberty of the Mashiyach, liberty and not subjugation, turning from the yoke of servitude"* (Galatians 5:1). The liberty of the Mashiyach means that "the Devil" *cannot* keep on enticing you to sin and that you no longer a slave to sin! Liberty in Mashiyach means that Mashiyach has imparted the strength (Grace) into your soul to turn *from* sin and *toward* Torah!

Christian theologians everywhere are teaching that Paul liberated Christians from observance of Torah. Those who sit on the hill of evil counsel preach a "liberty" that means Torah can be broken without consequences. The spin goes that "Jesus did it all so you don't have to", and "you can't stop sinning even if you tried." But the real Rav Shaul was a man passionate about "perfection"; he knew nothing of being "justified" in sin:

*"…whom we proclaim and teach and make known to every man, in all wisdom, that we may present every man **perfect** in Y'shua the Mashiyach. And for this also I toil and strive with the aid of the strength that is imparted to me"* (Colossians 1:28, 29). Paul preached the Messianic continuum that originated before Gan Eden (the Garden of Eden) and visited Noach, Awraham, Israel, Dawid, Mashiyach, James, Peter and John through Paul, and is carried into the return of Y'shua Mashiyach Ben Dawid (see footnote to Revelation 3:2). This ***tamiym*** (perfect) man within those who follow Mashiyach is the goal of Mashiyach and these fruits are clearly seen in Paul's ministry:

*"For our preaching among you was not in words only; but also in power and in the Ruach haKodesh and in genuine persuasion…you became imitators of us and of our Master in that you received the Word in great affliction and with the joy of the Ruach haKodesh. And you were a pattern for all the believers...For from you the Word of our Master sounded forth…in every place, your faith in Elohim is heard of; so that we have no need to say any thing concerning you. For they declare, what progress we had with you and how you **turned** from the worship of idols to Elohim, that you might worship the living and true Elohim while you wait for his Son from heaven, that Y'shua whom He raised from the dead who delivers us from the wrath to come"* (1 Thess. 1:5-10). This beautiful portion of an eloquent love letter reveals souls *turned* to Elohim in worship while they wait for his Son Y'shua. "Turned" means *teshuva* (see "They Repented Not" in Appendix). This word is used throughout Renewed Covenant writings and was the very first word that came out of Y'shua's own mouth Matthew 4:17

Not only did Paul clearly state that these souls made *teshuva* but later in this letter he said: *"And may the Elohim of peace sanctify you all perfectly, and keep blameless your whole spirit and your soul and your body till the coming of our Master Y'shua the Mashiyach"* (1 Thess. 5:23). No "justification" here, but Elohim is ***"sanctifying you all";*** these souls are a Kedoshim (Set Apart people) who have Torah written upon their hearts. (To get an idea what Kedoshim means, please see the parasha (Torah portion) called Kedoshim in Vayikra/Leviticus chapters 19-20). Being Set Apart means to turn from breaking YHWH's Commandments and keeping Torah. But, in this same letter, Paul declares why he was getting heat from the Pharisees:

*"For you, my Brothers, became assimilated to the assemblies of Elohim in Judaea, the persons who are in Y'shua the Mashiyach in that you so suffered, even you from your own countrymen as also they from the Jews, the persons who slew our Master Y'shua the Mashiyach and persecuted their own prophets and us; and they please not Elohim and are made hostile to all men; **and they forbid us to speak to the Gentiles** that they may have life; to fill up their sins at all times. And wrath comes on them to the uttermost"* (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16).

There is only one thing that would cause the Pharisees to go after Paul for teaching Mashiyach to the Gentiles: TORAH! The Pharisees think they sit in Moses' seat. They think they own Torah.

If Paul had been preaching against Torah it would have been no contest. But, more precisely, Paul was teaching the Torah *halakha* of Mashiyach Y'shua to the Gentiles, and the Pharisees were enraged! In 1 Thessalonians we see that "countrymen" (Gentiles) were also turning on Gentiles, why? Mainly because the classic Greek intellectual modernist, humanist Gentiles don't like to be told that they must also walk upright and observe Torah – and they certainly don't want to be associated with a Jewish "holy book."

Paul the Traveler

Rav Shaul's travels took him to many destinations with large Jewish populations, including Greece, which is home to the longest continuous Jewish presence in the European Diaspora, going back 2,300 years. When Jews first settled in Greece they were called Romaniotes, and they preserved distinct synagogue practices. Jewish communities existed in Thessaly, Beoetia, Macedonia, Aetolia, Attica, Argos, Corinth and throughout much of the Peloponnese, and also on the islands of Euboea and Crete. There were synagogues in Philippi, Thessalonica, Veroia, Athens and Corinth, and Rav Shaul visited these areas that had strong Jewish communities for obvious reasons: he was a Jew. In Paul's day, as today, the majority of Jews turned to the religion and culture of the locals, which gave him the opportunity to reach secular Jews as well as Gentiles.

Prosperity Paul

Today all types of Christian denominations ride high on the back of their in-house versions of "Paul the Apostle" – the seminarians, the preachers, the pastors, the priests, and the "TV evangelists" who sport all manner of materialistic accoutrement known to carnal man. But these are definitely not Paul's protégés:

"And Paul hired a house, at his own cost, and resided in it two years; and there he received all that came to him" (Acts 28:30). Even into the latter part of his very dynamic and powerful ministry to the Gentiles Paul, who earned his money working as a saddle maker, was a renter (guest), shelling rent money out of his own pocket.

"…because he was of their trade, he took lodgings with them, and worked with them; for by their trade they were saddle-makers. And he spoke in the synagogue every Shabbat, and persuaded the Jews and Gentiles" (Acts 18:3, 4). Paul the mighty Apostle, a mighty evangelist to the Gentiles, had to work odd jobs to pay his expenses! Just how popular can an evangelist/apostle be who has to do the honorable thing and work with his own hands to pay his own rent?

"And you know also, Philippians, that in the beginning of the annunciation, when I left Macedonia, not one of the assemblies communicated with me in respect to receiving and giving, except you only" (Philippians 4:15). Paul was certainly not flush with finances; those who emphatically claim that they "know Paul" would never live like him. The "rich" hirelings would never give up their ego-maniac massive church buildings or their huge statues of Peter, Paul and Mary – idols that are abominations to the real Paul. No, if the religious folk really preached Paul the Pharisee who followed Mashiyach…it's very likely they wouldn't be nearly so popular after all…just like the real Paul.

Religious Leaders

"The days of visitation are come, the days of recompense are come;
Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the man of the spirit is mad,
for the multitude of your iniquity, and the great hatred." Hosea 9:7

Pastors, Prophets, Priests, Rabbis and all religious spiritual leaders fall into a separate category when it comes to YHWH's judgment. Spiritual leaders who have spoken in the Name of YHWH (or the LORD) have unique covenant responsibilities to the Almighty as "Shepherds of Israel."

They represent the Word of YHWH on this earth. The lifestyle and teaching of every leader is judged at a much higher level of accountability than those who come to them seeking the Kingdom of Elohim (see Deut. 18:20; Jer. 14; 23; 27; 29). It makes no difference which label a leader chooses, whether Christian, Jewish, Messianic, Israelite or a specific denomination; each leader by virtue of their position in the community has elected to be a voice for YHWH and His Mashiyach. Yet the vast majority of Israel's shepherds, whose religious "credentials" and "ordinations" are highly esteemed among men, have no fear of YHWH. Rather than to sanctify His Name, they prefer to wallow in the praise of men. It is these false shepherds who entice people to be comforted in their sins, and who are fearful of man and government and religious hierarchies that are anti-Mashiyach.

Religious leaders constantly reassure their congregants that they will receive special reward from heaven, and that their "belief" makes them acceptable to YHWH. They have no fear of judgment because they feel "called and chosen" by their "G-d." The people who establish and reinforce religious hierarchies are the most deadly souls on Earth when it comes to the sanctity of Truth because they sit in judgment of truth and teach that "it doesn't matter" whether you observe Torah or not and that "you don't have to" observe Torah as the Word of YHWH because "Jesus did it all" for you. Anyone who makes friendship with false religious leaders is not sanctifying the Word of YHWH. The reason YHWH gave capital punishment to false prophets was because they exercise power over people's souls to destroy them for an eternity. The pleasures of religion for a season are an abomination unto YHWH and His Mashiyach. Y'shua was neither a pacifist nor a social butterfly.

Normally, when the religious leaders are warned about being "off-the-mark," instead of delving into the Scriptures to confirm whether or not their actions line up with YHWH's Word they often become defensive and resort to vehement defense of their traditions and seminary qualifications and go on the attack against those who are upright in Mashiyach and observe Torah. These types are as skilled politicians and businessmen who "are in it" for the praise of men and the money. Most "televangelists" fall into this category; they ask, "what difference does it make" whether Christians keep YHWH's Word and His Feasts or those of pagan origin?

"Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says YHWH. Therefore YHWH Elohim of Israel says this against the pastors that feed My people; You have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, says YHWH" (Jeremiah 23:1). Modern Christian leaders are haughty against Torah; they speak evil against the Unity of the Word of YHWH given through Moshe and Mashiyach Y'shua. They uphold religious church "fathers" who speak evil of Torah, the Jews and the original followers of Mashiyach. The Rabbis are also guilty of being haughty against Y'shua, devising cunning fables and shrewd theologies to label themselves as their own "suffering servant" of Isaiah 53. They insist that *they* (Jews) have suffered, *they* are the righteous, *they* are bringing righteousness to the Earth, and that "we" are the true light to the world; not Y'shua. While no one can deny that Jewish people have undergone horrendous trials at the hands of genocidal maniacs of every stripe and almost in every generation, the point is that no human is immune from sin. Furthermore, since Isaiah 53 clearly says that it was Israel's sins that caused the suffering of Mashiyach; the nation of Israel and Mashiyach cannot be one and the same. In other words, Israel cannot be stricken for Israel. Scripture clearly shows that lineage is no bulwark from the responsibility of individual righteousness:

"Howl, you shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, you principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and you shall fall like a pleasant vessel. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and a howling of the principal of the flock, shall be heard: for YHWH has spoiled their pasture. And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of YHWH. He has forsaken his covert, as the lion: for their land is desolate

because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of His fierce anger" (Jeremiah 25:34-38). The shepherds are principals of the flock who prefer to teach about "religious love" rather than YHWH's sanctified and righteous love. They refuse to bear the infamy of truth in a fallen world and to sanctify the Word of YHWH. Preaching is often masterfully worded, calculated and emotionally packed to stimulate the senses, and the messages are intellectualized with a political spin to make people feel comfortable in sin.

"For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed" (Isaiah 9:16). Rabbis, Priests and Pastors stand before pulpits all over the Earth claiming to have been ordained according to the Word of YHWH; yet they endorse anti-Mashiyach government agendas and corporate atrocities that are involved in all-out war against the Kingdom of Elohim. When the Nazis began to perpetrate evil against Jewish communities in Germany many Rabbis were preaching that Jews had nothing to fear. Jews who were choosing to flee Germany were scorned by many Rabbis who were preaching about their "rights," peace and security. Now the world is facing a very prolonged evil humanist-relativist agenda where money, politics and power determine what is moral, and the religious leaders are again marching in step with the Beast. If it were possible even the chosen (elect) would be deceived; yet a social need lies within each soul desiring the best for everyone and to cherish community values, but when the multitudes have turned against the Kingdom of Elohim it becomes extremely difficult and painful to walk alone. *"For thus has YHWH spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall YHWH of Hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof"* (Isaiah 31:4). This imagery reflects a scenario from ancient times, but the message is for today. The majority of shepherds have made an agreement with anti-Mashiyach; they are set against YHWH and His Mashiyach, but all the large congregations and institutions will not make a shred of difference on Judgment Day. Some estimate that billions of people were living on Earth while Noah was building the ark, and you can sure that many were very religious, just like today.

"All you beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all you beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping (dreaming, talking in their sleep), lying down, loving to slumber. Yes, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come you, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Isaiah 56:9-12).

YHWH calls the false shepherds "beasts" because they rip His people to shreds. Notice how they "fetch wine" which represents doctrine. The "strong drink" refers to religion that opposes the Kingdom of Elohim; it is high-handed rebellion. Such a point is also made by Mashiyach Y'shua frequently. Mashiyach refers to rebellious Jews and Gentiles as dogs and pigs, respectively; only the righteous are known as sheep. The metaphor also of "new wine in old wineskins" is similarly an attack on the Pharisees who took the old wine (Torah), which Y'shua calls "sufficient" here, and then try to pour into that perfect sweetness their newer man-made traditions. The result, of course, is that the skins burst and the wine is ruined!

Notice how the false shepherds prophesy of future blessings and much more abundance coming your way. This is the prosperity gospel; richness and reward that come by exploitation of the poor, just like today in most churches. Also notice that in a literal sense this prophecy exposes how Sunday is preferred over Shabbat; "tomorrow shall be as this day"… the false shepherds changed Shabbat to the morrow Sunday as part of their "strong drink." Neither Mashiyach nor his followers would ever have thought to "change times and laws" because that is purely the work of anti-Messiah.

"There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled. Thus says YHWH my Elohim; Feed the flock of

the slaughter; Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, 'Blessed be YHWH; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not" (Zechariah 11:3-5).

A popular wickedness among religious leaders is to claim that "the LORD" is blessing them with riches in the name of "Jesus"; riches, credentials, ordination, popularity and worldliness delight the carnal flesh. But the spiritual man seeks truth, justice, mercy, faith, humility, service and loyalty to YHWH and His Mashiyach. In reality every leader of YHWH is called to be a humble servant who serves, bears each one up, strengthens each one and helps others to overcome by standing along side as equals. The hierarchical religions of this world are anti-Mashiyach, even though they preach from a "Holy Bible" about Mashiyach.

"Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of YHWH; As I live, says Adonai YHWH, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O you shepherds, hear the word of YHWH; Thus says Adonai YHWH; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them" (Ezekiel 34:7-12). Religious leaders are very foolish to console themselves and their flocks that "Old Testament" prophecies don't apply to them. They believe and teach that all these Scriptures have to do with Ancient Israel's false leaders. In reality *all* these prophecies receive fulfillment in the "days of Mashiyach." In other words, the Kingdom of Elohim has been in existence since before Adam and Eve were created; and before haSatan brought rebellion against YHWH. Therefore, every prophecy in Scripture that says, "Thus says YHWH" is part of yesterday, today and future in Mashiyach.

Y'shua said, *"Beware of false prophets that come among you in the clothing of lambs, but from within are ravenous wolves. But you will know them by their fruits. Why do men pick grapes from thorns or figs from thistles?"* (Matthew 7:15, 16) Y'shua was accessible, transparent, accountable and a servant, not a lord like most of the "religious" leaders of today. Y'shua respected everyone and responded with truth, often quoting the Tanakh and elevating Torah as the Living Word of YHWH. Y'shua did not hide behind credentials or the "ordination" of men; he chose to honor his Father by clarifying that he had come in his Father's Name. Neither Y'shua nor his followers used people in order to obtain wealth, nor did they use Scripture to mine for gold. Rav Shaul served and worked with his own hands rather than to "leech" off the Body of Mashiyach. False religious leaders, however, pick grapes from thorns; they bring stimulating and entertaining worldly discussions into their congregations and meld them with their Bible teachings. In other words, they pick figs from thistles and make sin attractive to their sheep.

"Then they will deliver to afflictions and they will kill you and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. Then many will stumble and will hate one another and will betray one another. And many false prophets will arise and deceive many. And because of the growth of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold" (Matthew 24:9-12).

Religious leaders operate under the authority of worldly governments which are established and endorsed by the Beast. The false prophets deceive many because they are invited into congregations by false shepherds. While the love of many grows cold because of Torahlessness, the false religious leaders puff themselves up and do Satan's work without bothering to check if their "teachings" line up with the Ancient Path of Mashiyach according to the original Scriptures! "*For they are false apostles, crafty workers, and pretend apostles of the Mashiyach. And in this there is nothing strange. For if Satan pretends to be a Messenger of light, It is no great thing if his ministers pretend to be ministers of righteousness whose end shall be according to their works"* (2 Corinthians 11:13, 14).

Many Christian leaders are very quick to vilify and label contrarians as anti-Christian, anti-Grace, anti-Jesus and anti-Church, so that they won't have to respond to the lies that emanate from the pulpits. The wolves *pretend* to know all about righteousness; they use loopholes and religious "solutions" in order to show that you "don't have to" walk in righteousness or be upright according to Torah. They tell you "Jesus paid it all; you don't have to do anything but 'believe'…." And in the meantime, be sure to keep those tithes coming in! In some Messianic Jewish circles leaders are "qualified" simply because they are Jewish. Messianic congregations were underwritten by Christian ministries who posture their denomination and doctrines as having authentic "Jewish roots" simply because they have "Jewish converts" who practice and teach their doctrines.

If you're from a traditional Jewish background, the Rabbis will assure you that you have very special inalienable rights in the *Olam Haba* (World to Come); you've already got it all in the bag; you don't need Mashiyach, just tradition. *"There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Proverbs 14:12).

"My beloved, do not believe all spirits; but discriminate among spirits whether they are of Elohim: for many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). The Shlichim ask that we discriminate and discern spiritual matters for ourselves. We are to approach YHWH and welcome Torah (the Word of YHWH) into our hearts so that we can understand the matter according to the Will of YHWH.

Mashiyach said: *"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the flock. But a hireling who is not the shepherd nor are the sheep his, when he sees a wolf coming leaves the sheep and flees. And the wolf comes and plunders and scatters the flock. Now the hireling flees because he is hired and he does not care about the flock. I am the Good Shepherd and I know those who are mine. And those who are mine know me. Just as my Father knows me and I know my Father and I lay down my life for the sake of the flock"* (Yochanan 10:11-14).

Mashiyach is our Rabbi, Pastor, Priest and Shepherd. We must not look to men for what belongs solely to Mashiyach. The hierarchy in the churches and synagogues is a product of Babylon, even though men may adopt "spiritual" titles for themselves. Where two or three are gathered in the Name of YHWH according to Mashiyach, the Spirit of Mashiyach will provide the discernment of the matter *if* we have ears to hear. Mashiyach chooses individuals for positions of leadership by putting the Ruach haKodesh upon them, but most people choose their leaders based on the size of their fan clubs.

Renewed Covenant

"Behold, the days come, says YHWH, that I will make a renewed (chadash) covenant (brit) with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was an husband unto them, says YHWH: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, says YHWH, I will put my Torah in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know YHWH: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says YHWH: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Both Aramaic "***khawdata***" and Hebrew "***chadasha***" mean to renew, make anew or to repair. Notice how ***chadash*** has been translated in: 1 Sam. 11:14; 2 Chr. 15:8; 2 Chr. 24:4, 12; Job 10:17; Psalm 51:10; 103:5; 104:30; Isaiah 61:4; and Lamentations 5:21.

- *"You **chadash** (renew) your witnesses against me, and increase your indignation upon me; changes and war are against me."* (Job 10:17)
- *"Create in me a clean heart, O Elohim; and **chadash** (renew) a right spirit within me."* (Psalm 51:10)
- *Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is **chadash** (renewed) like the eagle's."* (Psalm 103:4)
- *"Turn Thou us unto you, O YHWH, and we shall be turned; **chadash** (renew) our days as of old."* (Lam. 5:21)

It is impossible in the context of these verses for *chadash* to mean "new." Isaiah 61:4 also uses ***chadash*** to refer to those in Mashiyach who: *"…**chadash** (repair) the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."* The word "chadash" is so instrumental to "replacement theology" that the James Strong's Concordance (a popular Christian resource), chose to give this term two reference numbers: renew #2318 and new #2319. Theologians have long used this term to steer "the church" away from Torah. As mentioned previously, Marcion, a post-apostolic church founder who was actually considered a heretic by the early Church, coined the terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" suggesting, in effect, that the "old" was replaced by the "new." Polycarp referred to him as the "firstborn of the Devil," yet his false anti-Torah theology is still being honored by nearly every Christian on earth.

Terms and Conditions of Covenant

"This is my blood of the renewed covenant,
which for the sake of many is shed for the forgiveness of sins." Matthew 26:28

All covenants are made in faith, whether it is the Covenant YHWH made, or covenants and contracts between one another. Mashiyach gave his blood in Faith so that those who enter into the Renewed Covenant could put Faith in his Righteous offering. YHWH sees the intent of the heart of those who put Faith in His Mashiyach, and He accepts us according to Faith. As in every other Covenant or contract there is also an exchange of value. In the Renewed Covenant Mashiyach offers redemption for your life, but you must reciprocate your part of the Covenant by Faith and be obedient, just as Mashiyach himself was obedient and Faithful unto death.

"Now the promises were made to Awraham and to his seed as a covenant. He did not say seeds, as of many, but seed, as of one, that is Mashiyach. And this I say: that the covenant that was previously confirmed of Elohim in Mashiyach cannot be repudiated and (nor) the promise nullified by Torah which came four hundred and thirty years later" (Galatians 3:16, 17). Rav Shaul employed two words ***aytmelekh*** and ***molkana***, which both mean "promise"; therefore, this could be stated as "a promise on top of a promise". An extremely important factor about the "promise" is that YHWH's WORD is His promise! The common expression, "I give you my word" or "you have my word on this" is a similar promise of covenant, but YHWH is known for giving and keeping His Word. *"For He remembered His holy **davar** (word/promise), and Awraham His servant*" (Psalm 105:42). *"And Solomon said unto Elohim…Now, O YHWH Elohim, let Your **davar** (word/promise) unto David my father be established"* (2 Chronicles 1:8, 9).

Rav Shaul emphatically taught that the promises made to Awraham and his seed (Mashiyach) was a Covenant that could not be repudiated or nullified by Torah. Even if religious traditions teach that Torah nullifies the original promise made to Awraham in Mashiyach, we must realize that it's impossible! Rav Shaul was even more emphatic when he declared: *"Is the Torah we received against the promises of Elohim? Elohim forbid!"* (Galatians 3:21) The reality is that Jewish or Christian tradition will in no way manipulate Torah or diminish the promise. Those who think they've got Torah, but reject Mashiyach are deceiving themselves, because the Promise came before Torah. But let's be fair, those who use "the Promise" to manipulate or diminish Torah are equally deceived. Both rabbinical Judaism and Christianity are guilty of making void the Covenant Promise and Torah by their own traditions. The "Terms and Conditions" of Covenant

apply to every soul, and they are magnified by Y'shua who came to: *"magnify the Torah, and make it honorable"* (Isaiah 42:21).

Here are some examples of how Y'shua magnified Torah:

- *"…whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment"* (Matthew 5:22).
- *"…who that looks at a woman as lustfully at once has committed adultery in his heart"* (Matthew 5:28).
- *"…if you desire to enter into life, keep the Commandments"* (Matthew 10:17).
- *"Depart from me, you workers of iniquity!"* (Matthew 7:23)
- *"Why do you call to me, "My Master, my Master" and the thing that I say, you do not do?"* (Luke 6:46)

Y'shua and all his original followers clearly taught that the Renewed Covenant is to be written upon the heart.

"But now, Y'shua the Mashiyach has received a ministry which is better than that: as also the covenant of which he is made the Mediator is better, and is given with better promises than the former. For, if the first (covenant) had been faultless, there would have been no place for this second (one)" (Hebrews 8:6-7). Many Christians seem to willfully forget that without the first covenant, the "second one" is impossible! Rav Shaul drew from Jeremiah 31:31-34, indicating that the *Renewed Covenant* is a contingency triggered by, and deriving authority from, the first covenant.

Let's examine a small selection of the original Terms and Conditions of the *first covenant*:

Faith:

- *"Know therefore that YHWH your Elohim, he is Elohim, the faithful El, which keeps covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;"* (Deut. 7:9)
- *"…but the just shall live by his faith."* (Hab. 2:4)
- *"Open you the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the faith may enter in."* (Isaiah 26:2)

Belief:

- *"And he believed in YHWH; and He counted it to him for righteousness."* (Gen. 15:6)
- *"…the people feared YHWH, and believed YHWH, and His servant Moses."* (Ex. 14:31)
- *"I come to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever"* (Ex. 19:9)

Love:

- *"And you shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."* (Deut. 6:5)
- *"…YHWH loved you, and because He would keep the oath"* (Deut. 7:8)
- *"He will love you, and bless you, and multiply you"* (Deut. 7:13)
- *"Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."* (Deut. 10:19)

Friendship:

- *"And YHWH spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaks unto his friend."* (Ex. 33:11)
- *"Are you not our Elohim, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and gave it to the seed of Abraham your friend for ever?"* (2 Chronicles 20:7)

- *"But you, Israel, are my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend."* (Isaiah 41:8)
- *"…and there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother"* (Proverbs 18:24)

Mercy:

- *"…and you have magnified your mercy, which you have showed unto me in saving my life"* (Gen. 19:19)
- *"And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."* (Ex. 20:6)
- *"And he made the mercy seat of pure gold"* (Ex. 37:6)
- *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life"* (Psalm 23:6)
- *"All the paths of YHWH are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies."* (Psalm 25:10)
- *"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed"* (Psalm 85:10)

Grace:

- *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of YHWH."* (Gen. 6:8)
- *"YHWH passed by before him, and proclaimed, YHWH, YHWH Elohim, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin"* (Ex. 34:6, 7)
- *"Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy Torah graciously."* (Psalm 119:29)
- *"He will be very gracious unto you at the voice of your cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer you."* (Isaiah 30:19)

Compassion:

- *"…that YHWH may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show you mercy, and have compassion upon you"* (Deut. 13:17)
- *"But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: certainly, many times He turned His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath."* (Psalm 78:38)
- *"YHWH is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy."* (Psalm 145:8)
- *"Who is an Elohim like unto Thee, that pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retains not His anger for ever, because He delights in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us"* (Micah 7:18, 19)

Torah:

- *"Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My Torah."* (Gen. 26:5)
- *"One Torah shall be to him that is native, and unto the stranger that sojourns among you."* (Ex. 12:49)
- *"that YHWH'S Torah may be in your mouth"* (Ex. 13:9)
- *"And what nation is there so great, that has statutes and judgments so righteous as all this Torah, which I set before you this day?"* (Deut. 4:8)
- *"Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and your newcomer that is within your gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear YHWH your Elohim, and observe to do all the words of this Torah."* (Deut. 31:12)
- *"…observe to do all the words of this Torah. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life"* (Deut. 32:46)
- *"The Torah of YHWH is perfect, converting the soul."* (Psalm 19:7)

Promise:

- *"For YHWH your Elohim blesses you, as He promised you"* (Deut 15:16)
- *"And YHWH has avouched you this day to be His peculiar people, as He has promised you, and that you should keep all His Commandments."* (Deut. 26:18)
- *"For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant."* (Psalm 105:42)

Blessing:

- *"And I will bless them that bless you, and curse him that curse you: and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed."* (Genesis 12:3)
- *"And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves; because you have obeyed my voice."* (Gen. 22:18)
- *"YHWH blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of YHWH was upon all that he had"* (Gen. 39:5)
- *"All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spoke unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them."* (Gen. 49:28)
- *"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life,"* (Deut. 30:19)
- *"…for there YHWH commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."* (Psalm 133:3)
- *"The blessing of YHWH, it makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it."* (Proverbs 10:22)

Curse:

- *"Blessed is he that blesses you, and cursed is he that curses you."* (Numbers 24:9)
- *"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if you obey the commandments of YHWH your Elohim, which I command you this day: And a curse, if you will not obey the commandments of YHWH your Elohim."* (Deut. 11:26-28)
- *"…if you will not hearken unto the voice of YHWH your Elohim, to observe to do all His Commandments and His Statutes which I command you this day; that all these curses shall come upon you, and overtake you"* (Deut. 28:15)
- *"As he (the wicked soul) loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him."* (Psalm 109:7

Sacrifice:

- *"He that sacrifices unto any elohim, save unto YHWH only, he shall be utterly destroyed*." (Ex. 22:20)
- *"And Samuel said, Has YHWH as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of YHWH? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."* (1 Samuel 15:22, 23)
- *"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of Elohim more than burnt offerings."* (Hosea 6:6)
- *"But cursed be the deceiver, which has in his flock a male, and vows, and sacrifices unto Adonai a corrupt thing:"* (Malachi 1:14)

Blood:

- *"What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries unto me from the ground."* (Gen. 4:10)
- *"But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat. And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of Elohim made He man."* (Gen. 9:4-6)

- *"…and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you"* (Exodus 12:13)
- *"And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which YHWH has made with you concerning all these words."* (Exodus 24:8)
- *"And he shall sprinkle the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."* (Lev. 16:19)

Covenant:

- *"But with you will I establish My covenant; and you shall come into the ark"* (Gen. 6:18)
- *"And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between Elohim and every living creature"* (Gen. 9:16)
- *"YHWH made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'Unto your seed have I given this land'"* (Gen. 15:18)
- *"And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you… and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him"* (Gen. 17:10-21)
- *"And Elohim heard their groaning, and Elohim remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob."* (Ex. 2:24)
- *"Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."* (Ex. 19:5, 6)
- *"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Shabbat, to observe the Shabbat throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant."* (Ex. 31:16)
- *"And if you shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that you will not do all my commandments, but that you break My covenant…I will set my face against you"* (Lev. 26:15-17)
- *"So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands."* (Deut. 9:15)
- *"…for they have observed Your Word, and kept Your Covenant"* (Deut. 33:9)
- *"Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My Covenant which I commanded them"* (Josh. 7:11)
- *"I will make a renewed covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah"* (Jeremiah 31:31)

Offerings:

- *"And YHWH had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect."* (Gen. 4:4, 5)
- *"And He said, Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and get into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of...And Abraham said, My son, Elohim will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering…and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son."* (Gen. 22:2-13)
- *"Moses gave commandment…saying, 'Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary.' So the people were restrained from bringing."* (Ex. 36:6, 7)
- *"And you shall offer peace offerings, and shall eat there, and rejoice before YHWH your Elohim. And you shall write upon the stones all the words of this Torah very plainly."* (Deut. 27:7, 8)
- *"Though you offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take you away from me*

the noise of your songs; for I will not hear the melody of your viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. Have you offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But you have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images" (Amos 5:22-26)

- *"Will a man rob Elohim? Yet you have robbed me. But you say, Wherein have we robbed You? In tithes and offerings."* (Malachi 3:8)

Righteous:

- *"And YHWH said unto Noah, Come you and all your house into the ark; for you have I seen righteous before me in this generation."* (Gen 7:1)
- *"And he believed in YHWH; and He counted it to him for righteousness."* (Gen. 15:6)
- *"Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city"* (Gen. 18:23, 24)
- *"And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: YHWH is Righteous, and I and my people are wicked."* (Ex. 9:27)
- *"Keep yourself far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay not: for I will not clear (justify) the wicked. And you shall take no gift: for the gift blinds the wise, and perverts the words of the righteous."* (Ex. 23:7, 8)
- *"If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall clear (justify) the righteous, and condemn the wicked."* (Deut 25:1)
- *"You join with him that rejoices and works righteousness, those that remember You in Your ways: behold, You are angry; for we have sinned: (but) in those is eternity, and we shall be saved."* (Isaiah 64:5)
- *"Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your Torah is the Truth."* (Psalm 119:142)

Truth:

- *"And YHWH passed by before him, and proclaimed, YHWH, YHWH Elohim, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,"* (Ex. 34:6)
- *"…who shall abide in Your tabernacle? who shall dwell in Your holy hill? He that walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart."* (Psalm 15:1, 2)
- *"All the paths of YHWH are mercy and truth unto such as keep His Covenant and His Testimonies."* (Psalm 25:10)

Repent:

- *"When you are in tribulation, and all these things are come upon you, even in the latter days, if you* ***turn*** *(repent) to YHWH your Elohim, and shall be obedient unto his voice;"* (Deut. 4:30)
- *"The Torah of YHWH is perfect,* ***converting*** *(repent) the soul: the testimony of YHWH is sure, making wise the simple."* (Psalm 19:7)
- *"All the ends of the world shall remember and* ***turn*** *(repent) unto YHWH: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee."* (Psalm 22:7)

Sin:

- *"If you do well, shall you not be accepted? and if you do not well, sin crouches down at the door. And unto you shall be his desire, and you shall rule over him."* (Genesis 4:7)
- *"And YHWH said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;"* (Genesis 18:20)

- *"Yet now, if You will forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which You have written. And YHWH said unto Moshe, Whosoever has sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book."* (Ex. 32:32, 33)
- *"And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the Commandments of YHWH; though he know it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity."* (Lev. 5:17)
- *"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still."* (Psalm 4:4)

Forgiveness:

- *"Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of Your mercy, and as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."* (Num. 14:19)
- *"…but You are an Elohim ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsook them not."* (Nehemiah 9:17)
- *"Bless YHWH, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases;"* (Psalm 103:2, 3)

Judgment:

- *"You shall not bend judgment; you shall not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift blinds the eyes of the wise, and perverts the words of the righteous."* (Deut. 16:19)
- *"He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: an Elohim of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He."* (Deut. 32:4)
- *"For YHWH loves judgment, and forsakes not His saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off."* (Psalm 37:28)
- *"Justice and judgment are the habitation of Your throne: mercy and truth shall go before Your face."* (Psalm 89:14)

Vengeance:

- *"Rejoice, O you nations, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land, and to His people."* (Deut. 32:43)
- *"O YHWH Elohim, to Whom vengeance belongs; O Elohim, to Whom vengeance belongs, shine forth."* (Psalm 94:1)
- *"For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come."* (Isaiah 63:4)

Hope:

- *"And he waited (hoped) yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more."* (Gen. 8:12)
- *"Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you that hope (wait) in YHWH."* (Psalm 31:24)
- *"Blessed is the man that trusts in YHWH, and whose hope is YHWH. For he shall be as a tree planted by the water…"* (Jeremiah 17:7, 8)

Hundreds of verses within the *first covenant* provide instruction for *"Love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control"* (Galatians 5:22, 23) and *"Against these there is no instruction put in place."* These elements of Covenant known as *"the fruits of the Spirit"* are revealed throughout the first covenant and bring confirmation of covenant within the spiritual man. Covenantees like Noah, Job, Abraham, Moses and David are *covenant* keepers who also demonstrated these fruits of the Spirit throughout their lives according to the "Perfection" of the Image of Elohim.

David recognized that the voice of YHWH is the Spirit of Mashiyach, which is why he stated: *"YHWH at thy right hand…"* (Psalm 110:5). All the forefathers and prophets of YHWH are Covenantees who entered into the *First Covenant* according to the Terms and Conditions given by the Spirit of Mashiyach. Peter states the obvious when he writes: *"…that life (namely) about which the prophets inquired when they were prophesying of the grace which was to be given to you. And they searched for the time which the Spirit of the Mashiyach dwelling in them did show and testify when the sufferings of the Mashiyach were to occur, and his subsequent glory*" (1 Peter 1:10-11). The Renewed Covenant is therefore a continuum of Faith and observance of Torah; it is a progressive revelation of not only YHWH and His Mashiyach, but a Covenant that elevates human potential to enter into the Image of Elohim and be transformed according to the spiritual man.

The Renewed Covenant is fulfilled by the Ruach haKodesh writing Torah (righteousness) upon the heart of the Covenantee and it has been established by the Covenantor (YHWH) through the shedding of Y'shua's blood and the power of Y'shua's resurrection. The Renewed Covenant is not based on any form of "human sacrifice" anymore than the martyrdom of a soul who sanctifies the Name of YHWH makes some sort of "human sacrifice." Y'shua sanctified the Name of YHWH in life and death by his obedience to YHWH. Neither was Abraham at the akeida (binding of Isaac) about to slay his son Isaac to make atonement for his sin as a "human sacrifice." Abraham was being tested for his obedience to YHWH, he was not asked to offer human blood for sin. Abraham's obedience clearly demonstrated that he would not withhold the life of his own son if that is what YHWH required. *"To obey is better than sacrifice"* (1 Samuel 15:22).

YHWH did not torture and kill His own son to establish the Renewed Covenant; it was man's religious "justice system" that put the perfection of Y'shua Mashiyach on the torture stake. If sin is condemned by means of the Commandment, how much more is it condemned by being responsible for putting to death YHWH's own likeness? Man's sin put Mashiyach on the torture stake; therefore, the Renewed Covenant upholds the Word of YHWH (Torah) which defines sin and love. *"And walk in love; as the Mashiyach also has loved us and has given up himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to Elohim, for a sweet aroma."* (Ephesians 5:2).

The term and definition of "New Testament" is anti-Mashiyach; it was coined by a Christo-Pagan named Marcion who viewed Y'shua as akin to one of the Greek gods of his own culture. Marcion taught that the G-d of the Jews was an evil god of wrath, judgment and terror, but that Je-Zeus was a kind and loving god. Marcion coined the terms "Old and New Testament" to demarcate YHWH and Y'shua as two separate G-ds who were at war with each other; hence, the dualism in Christian churches that use the terms Old and New Testament to uphold replacement and dispensational theology. The consequences of the fatal anti-Torah and anti-Mashiyach deception is very far reaching; so much so, in fact, that permissiveness of Covenant breaking is commonplace throughout Christendom.

The "Renewed Covenant" was foretold when Adam and Eve broke Covenant with YHWH. YHWH forgave their sin and promised the ultimate redemption which He Himself provided through the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). Just as Adam and Eve are the father and mother of all living souls, so is the Renewed Covenant offered to all inhabitants of the Earth through Mashiyach Y'shua. A very clear fulfillment of Isaiah 56:1-9 is seen in Mashiyach's followers when Gentile converts observe Shabbat and permit the Ruach haKodesh to write Torah upon their hearts as one body of believers along with Jews.

Sacrifice

There are great disparities between religious perspectives of sacrifice and what YHWH's Word instructs. The word "sacrifice" is generally meant to relinquish something of value, to give something up that you would prefer to keep. But it is impossible to "appease" YHWH by offering up something of monetary value in exchange for forgiveness or atonement. The intent of the heart (motive or kavanah) is the potent "ingredient" of each and every sacrifice; not its monetary earthly value. The physical offering or sacrifice is simply a token of what is in the heart. The process of sacrifice and offering is a mechanism that helps bring restoration between two parties.

Very few people today slaughter their own animals, much less, dedicate the life of an animal to YHWH who created it and kept it healthy. We go shopping, bring food home, prepare it, cook it, pray and have a party; yet, for some strange reason Western culture gets upset about the idea of sacrificing it – thanking YHWH for the life of the animal, for recognizing that YHWH is the one who gave the animal life, for making sure that the animal was treated with compassion, and for being thankful that the Giver of Life has kept it free from disease and for creating it for our pleasure.

Biblically speaking, there is a purpose behind all sacrifices and offerings. Everything we do in this life contains elements that we can sanctify (Set Apart) unto YHWH, and food provides a fundamental example of this. We learned from Cain and Abel that certain sacrifices are acceptable to YHWH, while others are not. We discovered that it isn't only *what* we sacrifice, but *how* we sacrifice it. The most common spontaneous sacrifices were the burnt offerings in which the sacrifices went up in smoke, becoming "invisible" except for a few remaining ashes. The burnt offering (olah – "that which ascends") went up in smoke, along with the person's sins. The flesh of the animal represents the flesh of man that also becomes "invisible" and returns to dust. The invisible (spiritual) component belongs to YHWH but it is obedience, righteous conduct and Faith that brings us into harmony with Heaven.

When making a sacrifice, the person's heart and focus is upon YHWH with thankfulness and gratitude for the forgiveness of his sin, for the joy of having inner peace restored and for the opportunity to approach the Master of the Universe. The burnt offerings pointed to mankind's temporary sojourn on Earth; it was given as an acknowledgement of YHWH's presence in a person's life. The temporal physical flesh can be thought of as a dwelling place for the spirit of man (as well as the mind, will and emotions); so if and when the "flesh" is overcome with carnal baggage, it must be completely emptied or destroyed so new life can begin. The *olah* sacrifice points to this process; the sins of man were symbolically put on the animal and then the flesh of the animal was destroyed. This, of course, points to Mashiyach ben Yoseph, the ultimate sin bearer who died and then resurrected to bring atonement.

Voluntary sacrifices such as burnt offerings were spontaneously made by those who desired to draw near to YHWH and, as all other sacrifices, they were offered with testimony and prayer for specific purposes. Sacrifice and offerings were meant to "open the windows of heaven" so that a person would hear from YHWH and have confidence and assurance their prayers were being heard. The outward demonstration must come from a pure heart but, of course, there are also some who simply go through the outward motions while under the watch of their peers.

The Temple in Jerusalem where prayers were made and sacrifices given, belonged to everyone who gave voluntary contributions. This concept points to the fact that all souls are required to support universal justice and equality. The sacrifices and offerings illustrated the importance of reconciliation, protecting unity, seeking forgiveness and establishing and maintaining harmony between us and YHWH and one another. Torah provides instruction regarding the care of domesticated animals; several Commandments require us to exercise compassion for the lives of animals and also instruct us to be compassionate and caring for people – after all, how much more value is a human soul worth? If we can't show mercy to an animal, we most likely won't

show mercy to a human, and vice versa. Animal sacrifices are not for YHWH's benefit; they are for ours (Psalm 50:7-15)! They provide a way for us to draw close to Him and open up our hearts in order to demonstrate the intent and allow us to hear His voice.

Regardless of all the posturing, all religions maintain some form of "sacrificial system." All Jewish and Christian religions expect charity and various forms of tithes and offerings from their adherents, and all modern institutions use creative ways of putting guilt and/or condemnation on people to force them to give a "sacrifice." It's not at all a matter of *if*, but *what* and *how* a sacrifice is made. All sacrifices are a mechanism to assist us in understanding and entering into the perfect work of Mashiyach. The fact that Rav Shaul made animal sacrifices (Acts 21:26) provides insight that sacrifices were not altogether abandoned by the Shlichim.

Torah differentiates between various sacrifices for sin, voluntary surrender, peace, gratitude, holiness, purity of life, reconciliation, atonement, thanksgiving, dedication, or consecration to YHWH and His Mashiyach. During the life of Y'shua and for some 34 years after his resurrection, his disciples were regularly, if not daily, in the temple. While teaching in the Temple, Y'shua discussed the appropriate ways of presenting sacrifices and offerings:

"If it is therefore that you offer your offering to the altar and there you should remember a certain grudge your brother holds against you leave there your offering upon the altar and go first and reconcile with your brother and then come offer your offering. Be in agreement with your adversary at Torah; while you are with him on the way, or else your adversary at Torah deliver you to the judge and the judge deliver you to the officer and you be thrown into the house of captives. And truly I say to you that you will not come out from there until you pay the last coin" (Matthew 5:23-26).

Furthermore, Y'shua never once spoke against sacrifices or the sacrificial system within Torah. Rav Shaul, as well as the Shlichim and the Prophets of YHWH, pointed out that matters of the heart were of extreme importance. Shaul said: *"…and it was a symbol for that time during which oblation and sacrifices were offered that could not make perfect the conscience of him who offered them"* (Hebrews 9:9). At no time in history could sacrifices be credited for a pure conscience; otherwise Cain's sacrifice would have given him a new pure heart, which was certainly not the case. Rather, sacrifices demonstrate and amplify what is already in the heart.

"And you also, as living stones, are built and become spiritual temples and Set Apart priests for the offering of Spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable before Elohim through Y'shua the Mashiyach" (1 Peter 2:5). Spiritual sacrifices in no way negate correlating physical elements of sacrifice. All authentic spiritual sacrifices have components of righteous Judgment, Justice, Mercy, Faith and Love; they are not cerebral but spiritual. They are not done in word only but in deed, and they are all to be given from a righteous and pure, Set Apart intent of the heart.

Salvation

Many religions claim rite of passage into the World to Come, and some even believe that if you say the "sinners' prayer" or follow certain "salvational doctrines" that you will be "saved." Thankfully, there was a man who posed the question to Y'shua: *"Good teacher, what is good that I should do that I should have eternal life?"* (Matthew 19:16) Some theologians feel this man was a misguided soul because he suggested that he had to "do" something rather than just "believe." We'll look at Y'shua's answer in a moment, but first let's find out what Keefa (Shimon Peter) was preaching, shortly after Y'shua was resurrected.

"And when they heard these things they were touched in their hearts, and they said to Shimon and to the rest of the Shlichim, 'What should we do, our brothers?' Shimon said to them, 'Repent and be immersed each of you in the name of Master YHWH-Y'shua for the forgiveness of sins, that you

may receive the gift of the Ruach haKodesh. For to you was the promise, and to your children, and to all those who are far away whom Elohim will call. And with many other words he would witness to them and he would beseech them while saying, Save (yourselves) from this perverse generation.' And some of them readily received his word and believed and were immersed. And there were added in that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:37-41).

Notice that Keefa preached both repentance and immersion in the name of Master YHWH-Y'shua. In this verse MarYah and Y'shua appeared right next to one another; therefore, we know that it is the Spirit of YHWH in Y'shua Who ultimately provides Salvation. Notice also there is not only the required action of repentance and immersion for the forgiveness of sins; *but* this is done in order to receive the gift of the Ruach haKodesh (Set Apart Spirit). The Ruach haKodesh will not indwell someone who is living in rebellion. The work of the Ruach haKodesh is to write Torah in the inward parts, which is confirmed by the appearance of "fruits" of the Spirit. In other words, each one of us must prepare a place in our hearts to welcome the Ruach haKodesh.

Repentance is an extremely important concept to understand and apply to our lives if we are planning to enter into eternal life. Repentance means "turn *to* YHWH," which also means one must turn *from* sin and keep the Commandments. Getting back to the question about eternal life, here's Y'shua's answer: *"Now if you desire to enter into life, keep the Commandments"* (Matthew 19:17). The answer applies to everyone who has ever drawn a breath. But the fellow wanted a quick fix and asked, *"Which ones?"* So Y'shua began listing Commandments from Torah (including the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20) and the fellow replied, *"All these things I have obeyed them from my youth. What do I lack?"* Now, how many have actually kept all the Ten Commandments from their youth, in their original context? Imagine being there yourself; could you respond as this fellow did? Y'shua is clearly teaching that the first prerequisite for salvation is keeping the Commandments!

In Mark 12:29-31 Mashiyach Y'shua teaches: *"The first of all the Commandments is "Hear O Israel. Master YHWH our Elohim is one. And you should love Master YHWH your Elohim with all of your heart, and with all of your soul, and with all of your mind, and with all of your strength." This is the first Commandment. And the second that is like it is that "you should love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other Commandment greater than these."* Mashiyach taught the central theme of Torah (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5; Leviticus 19:18); that *all* of Torah revolves around love toward YHWH and our fellow man. This Commandment is so primary that Rabbis have suggested that all the rest of Torah is "commentary" – that the rest of Torah provides the details about how to love YHWH and our fellow man. Clearly *everyone* must keep these two greatest Commandments for salvation; but we must keep them according to the Word of YHWH, not the traditions of men!

Yochanan (John) explains how we are to keep these great Commandments: *"And by this we shall be sensible that we know him, if we keep his Commandments. For he that says I know him, and does not keep his Commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him. But he that keeps his Word, in him is the Love of Elohim truly completed: for by this we know that we are in him. He that says I am in him is bound to walk according to his halakha. My beloved, I write no new commandment to you, but the old Commandment which you had from the beginning; and the old Commandment is the Word which you have heard"* (1 Yochanan 2:3-7). Insisting that we "love YHWH" or that we "know Him" can be two very different things. Notice that those who say they "know Him" and don't keep his Commandments are liars! How much more then are they liars who say they "love Him" and yet don't bother to keep His Commandments? Yochanan says he that *"keeps his Word"* has the Love of Elohim truly completed, and this is how we know that we are in him! Make no mistake, this is the same WORD that Dawid spoke when he declared, *"My tongue shall speak of Your Word: for all Your Commandments are righteousness."* Psalm 119:172

Rav Shaul (Paul) preached the same message; he emphasized, "*circumcision is nothing, neither is uncircumcision; but the keeping of Elohim's commands* [is what counts!]" (1 Corinthians 7:19).

Shaul also taught that it's very easy to be seduced by sin, but through the Commandments we are able to recognize what sin is: *"For sin, by the occasion which it found by means of the Commandment, seduced me and thereby slew me. Wherefore, Torah is Set Apart; and the Commandment is Set Apart, and righteous, and good"* (Romans 7:11, 12).

As we approach the end of the Scriptures there is a beautiful promise for all who expect eternal life: *"Blessed are they who do His (YHWH's) Commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city"* (Revelation 22:14). Is it any surprise that the Commandments of YHWH are tied together with the Tree of Life? At the end of Revelation we return to Gan Eden before original sin, where we see that the Tree of Life is the eternal Kingdom of Elohim. So, if you've heard religious people teach that we "don't have to keep the Commandments" of YHWH for salvation, then ask yourself this: Do those who teach that we don't have to keep the Commandments keep the Commandments themselves? Probably not – because they want you to join with them in what they do….

Most insist they "don't have to keep the Commandments" because "Jesus Christ" kept them perfectly for them. Herein is the "Mystery of Iniquity" revealed (2 Thessalonians 2:3-15). The lawless one, also known as anti-Mashiyach, heads the charge against keeping the Commandments in the name of the false Mashiyach. We can therefore clearly determine that this is the "other Jesus" Paul spoke of, who has inspired many souls into disobedience. We must be very careful about any false parallel, since Rav Shaul says that if anyone else, including a heavenly messenger, teaches a Good News other than the original one, that person is cursed! (Galatians 1:9-10).

Those who don't obey the Commandments don't want you obeying them either. Some "Christians" even teach that if you keep the Commandments you will go to hell because you've fallen from "Grace." The truth is that Grace is the gift of the Ruach haKodesh that empowers us to keep the Commandments of YHWH by Faith! Nearly everyone who keeps the Commandments of YHWH and observes Torah according to Mashiyach will testify that it is a miracle to be spiritually sustained and keep the Commandments in a world of people who've come to hate them for doing so.

In order to truly please our Creator, we must place our trust in Mashiyach Y'shua who teaches: *"if you desire to enter into life, keep the Commandments"* (Matthew 19:17). On this same theme Rav Shaul teaches; *"When we were dead in our sins, (Elohim) gave us life with the Mashiyach and rescued us by His grace"* (Ephesians 2:5). To be no longer "dead in our sins" means that we've stopped breaking the Commandments. The word rescued here literally means "saved." A variant of this word is what we call "Savior" in English. In Aramaic the concept of a savior is literally: "giver of life."

Shabbat

"*For the Master of the Shabbat*[66] *is the Son of man*." Matthew 12:8

What makes Shabbat so very special is that Y'shua Mashiyach is *Master of Shabbat*. Those who celebrate the Shabbat *in* Mashiyach recognize that Mashiyach is the eternal connection and the reason for Shabbat. Like anyone who hosts a celebration, they have purpose and reason for it that is conveyed to those who attend; and Shabbat, of course, is the weekly event of Mashiyach. Mashiyach was, is and forever will be the reason for Shabbat and this has been evident since Shabbat was given at the Creation of the World. Shabbat is the completion of the week where the spiritual man rests and rejuvenates his spirit, soul and body in Mashiyach.

Most folks understand that after six days of "work" that the Creator wasn't "all tuckered out", but He gave rest to those who would recognize His role in our lives. He rested from His works which means He delighted and was very satisfied with all that He created, therefore part of the "rest" we enter into is to enjoy the "fruits" of His and our own labors in Him. The greatest fruit

66 Exodus 20:8; 31:16, 17

of YHWH's labor was to make man in His Image, so that man could build, invent, plan and fulfill his own dreams and enter into (join) that *rest* that YHWH Himself Created. When YHWH's people enter into His Shabbat (rest) they are connecting with Mashiyach. However, what was intended as spiritual rest and unity with Mashiyach was soon reduced by many into a ritual effort of the flesh, an intellectual theological idea and a socio-political factor that took on humanist and Gnostic interpretations, making it a "burden" rather than a blessing.

Many Christians follow religious traditions that teach that "it doesn't matter which day you keep as Shabbat" because they've never personally experienced true Shabbat rest. Going to church on Saturday versus Sunday isn't automatically going to bring a person into Shabbat rest. It is Mashiyach who establishes Shabbat within the soul which is why it is foolhardy for religious men to conjur up with their own "Shabbat"… and posture Sunday as the Shabbat. Obviously if Christians would have realized that Mashiyach is the substance of the Seventh Day Shabbat, they would not have abandoned Shabbat. Most Christians believe that Mashiyach created all things (Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11) but for some reason many don't make the connection that it was Mashiyach's rest in Genesis: *"And Elohim blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which Elohim created and made"* (Genesis 2:3).

How did Christianity switch from Shabbat to Sunday?

Christians take their authority for Sunday as "the Lord's Day" from the post-apostolic Gentile founders of the Gentile church; *"The celebration of the Lord's Day in memory of the resurrection of Christ dates undoubtedly from the apostolic age. Nothing short of apostolic precedent can account for the universal religious observance in the churches of the second century. There is no dissenting voice. This custom is confirmed by the testimonies of the earliest post-apostolic writers, as Barnabas, Ignatius, and Justin Martyr."* (Philip Schaff, vol. 1, pg. 201-202). Did you catch the spin? Confirmed by the testimonies of the ***earliest post-apostolic writers*** who were none other than who?

Ignatius (AD 107) writes: *"Be not deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables, which are unprofitable. For if we still live according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace... If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing sabbaths, but fashioning their lives after the Lord's Day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death (which some deny), through which mystery we received faith, and on account of which we suffer in order that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ our only teacher, how shall we be able to live apart from him for whom even the prophets were looking as their teacher since they were his disciples in the spirit?... let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days of the week. It is absurd to speak of Jesus Christ with the tongue, and to cherish in the mind a Judaism which has now come to an end. For where there is Christianity there cannot be Judaism.... These things I address to you, my beloved, not that I know any of you to be in such a state; but, as less than any of you, I desire to guard you beforehand, that ye fall not upon the hooks of vain doctrine, but that you may rather attain to a full assurance in Christ..."* (Ignatius, *Epistle to the Magnesians*, chapters 8-9.) Ignatius very clearly contests the Seventh Day Shabbat; he sees those who observe Shabbat as putting *"the hooks of vain doctrine,"* whereas his Sunday doctrine is held as supreme. The authority of changing the Seventh Day Shabbat to the Sun-day is clearly that of Ignatius!

Epistle of Barnabas (AD 74-132): *"Moreover God says to the Jews, "Your new moons and Sabbaths cannot endure." You see how he says, "The present Sabbaths are not acceptable to me, but the Sabbath which I have made in which, when I have rested from all things, I will make the beginning of the eighth day which is the beginning of another world." Wherefore we Christians keep the eighth day for joy, on which also Jesus arose from the dead and when he*

appeared ascended into heaven." (The Letter of Barnabas, 15:6-8). Notice how this "Barnabas" suggests that his own words are straight from God? This "Barnabas" of course, is NOT the same person as Bar-Naba (Paul's traveling companion). This is Barnabas of Alexandria (a Gentile Christian) who claimed to have "perfect knowledge" of Christianity. Origen refers to this letter as "a Catholic epistle". Hilgenfeld, who devoted much attention to the Epistle of Barnabas writes, *"it was written at the close of the first century by a Gentile Christian of the school of Alexandria, with the view of winning back, or guarding from a Judaic form of Christianity, those Christians belonging to the same class as himself."*

Even to this day many Christian theologians are not aware that the Epistle of Barnabas was a forgery! It was written by someone who viewed Torah observance as purely Jewish material observance of ceremonial ordinances, of which the literal fulfillment was not sufficient, and the work of the Devil, and, according to him, Jews never received the divine covenant because they never understood its nature (ch. vii, 3, 11, ix, 7; x, 10; xiv). This "Barnabas" of Alexandria teaches that it was never intended that the precepts of the Law should be observed in their literal sense, that Jews never had a covenant with YHWH, that circumcision was the work of the Devil, etc. In his opinion, Jews did not know how to rise to the spiritual and typical meaning which YHWH intended when giving them the Torah.

However, the real Barnabas, who was Paul's traveling companion, was a Levite and a zealous Torah Observant follower of Mashiyach Y'shua. The difference between the real Barnabas and the imposter from Alexandria is like the difference between day and night, yet modern Christian theologians continue to place heavy value on the letter of a false witness. The fact of the matter is that Rome built a church on a false premise; by instituting Sunday the Roman Church took authority over the original Apostles and the Word of YHWH.

Council of Laodicea (AD 360): *"Christians should not Judaize and should not be idle on the sabbath, but should work on that day; they should, however, particularly reverence the Lord's day and, if possible, not work on it, because they were Christians"* (Council of Laodicea, canon 29). In 325 AD Constantine declared Sunday as the official day of Christian worship throughout the Roman Empire. From this point onward, if you were a Jewish follower of Mashiyach and you were caught keeping the Shabbat, your life and any Hebrew writings about Y'shua would have been in great danger.

Pope Gregory I (AD 597): *"But after that the grace of almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ, has appeared, the commandments of the Law which were spoken figuratively cannot be kept according to the letter. For if anyone says that this about the sabbath is to be kept, he must needs say that carnal sacrifices are to be offered."* (Gal. 5:2) (*Letters* 13:1). Even in those days there was a remnant of Christians who were observing the Seventh Day Shabbat. But most Christians come under Catholic authority with this same pathetic line of reasoning, that if one were to observe Shabbat they should also do animal sacrifice. Herein is the evidence of who, how, when and why the Seventh Day Shabbat was perverted by Gentile Christianity. The original followers of Y'shua knew nothing of this perversion; it was done solely by Gentile minded men, none of which had ever met or learned from Y'shua's disciples or the original Shlichim.

"Hence, the first day was already in the apostolic age honorably designated as 'the Lord's Day.'...it appears, therefore, from the New Testament itself, that Sunday was observed as a day of worship, and in special commemoration of the Resurrection, whereby the work of redemption was finished. The universal and uncontradicted Sunday observance in the second century can only be explained by the fact that it has its roots in apostolic practice." (Philip Schaff, vol. 1, pg. 478-479). Sunday observance is clearly a Second Century invention. The Gentile Christian "apostles" who invented and endorsed Sunday as the counterfeit Shabbat have been clearly named; their own pens witness of their willful violations against the Word of YHWH. They wrote with a deep anti-Semitic bias which also fueled the cultural acceptance of the Sunday rising Christ. Here Philip Schaff shows

a profound disregard for all Torah observant followers of Y'shua by suggesting a "universal and uncontradicted Sunday observance" when in fact, throughout church history, Gentile Church founders have levied ongoing scathing rebukes against followers of Mashiyach who observe the Seventh Day Shabbat. The very fact that Gentile Christian writers are aggressively defending Sunday and warning Christians against Shabbat is clear evidence that many Christians refused to follow the cunningly devised fable of the Christo-Pagan initiated Sunday observance.

Mashiyach is *Master of Shabbat*

Mashiyach is *Master of Shabbat* and all who enter into his rest on the Seventh Day Shabbat are sanctifying the Word of YHWH *according to* Mashiyach. Even Jews who don't regard Y'shua as Mashiyach but who are observing Shabbat are doing so because of the Word of YHWH, which is of course Mashiyach.

All Netzarim followers of Mashiyach Y'shua encourage everyone of all religious backgrounds and ethnicities to seek the *Ancient Paths* of Mashiyach and enter into the *rest* of Mashiyach each Shabbat. Shabbat is a time to deny yourself the daily mundane material tasks and let your spirit become elevated in Mashiyach. Psalms 92 is the Shabbat Psalm which concludes, *"To show that YHWH is upright: he is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him."* Apostle Paul taught; *"Let no (pagan) therefore judge you about food and drink, or about the distinctions of festivals and new moons and Shabbats which were shadows of the things then future; but the body of Mashiyach"* (Colossians 2:16, 17). Mashiyach gave these festivals, new moons and Shabbats to the body of Mashiyach and therefore, we are entrusted to guard these precious *Moedim* (Appointments) as unto him. Don't ever let worldly people or certain groups judge you for your obedience to the Truth!

Spiritual Armor

*"The night now passes away, and the day draws near. Let us therefore cast from us the works of darkness; and let us **put on the armor of light**."* (Romans 13:12)

"And as we have worn the likeness of him from the dust,
so shall we wear the likeness of him from heaven." (1 Corinthians 15:49)

*"**Put you on** the new [man], that is renewed in knowledge,*
***after the likeness of his Creator**."* (Colossians 3:10)

"And put on; the whole armor of Elohim, so that you may be able to stand against the strategies of the Accuser. For our conflict is not with flesh and blood, but with ***principalities***, and with those in ***authority***, and with the ***possessors*** of this dark world, and with the ***evil spirits*** that are under heaven. Therefore put on the whole armor of Elohim that you may be able to meet the evil [one]; and, being in all respects prepared, may stand firm. Stand up therefore, and:

- ***gird your Loins with Truth**; and*
- ***put on the Breastplate of Righteousness;***
- *And **defend your feet with the Preparation of the Good News of Peace**. And now take to you the confidence (shield) of faith, by which you will have power to quench all the fiery darts of the evil [one].*
- *And **put on the Helmet of Salvation**; and take hold of the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of Elohim. And pray, with all prayers and supplications, in spirit, at all times: and in prayer be watchful, at all seasons, praying constantly, and interceding for all the set apart believers"* (Ephesians 6:11-18).

Putting on the "***new man***" or the "***armor of light***" means to be transformed into the "image of Elohim." Notice the intended wordplay as Rav Shaul contrasts the ***zayna*** (armor) of Elohim with

the ***tzentah*** (strategies) of haSatan (the adversary). The four pieces of armor shield against the four strategies of haSatan. Notice also the order in which Rav Shaul "arrays the battle." The four classes of *shaida* (demons) fit into the order of each piece of armor; the Helmet corresponds to "principalities" which bring about accusation; the Breastplate corresponds to the "authorities," and so on. Rav Shaul teaches that the first Adam was physical, but that the second was spiritual; *"And as we have worn the likeness of him from the dust, so shall we wear the likeness of him from heaven."* 1 Corinthians 15:49

Principalities	Helmet of Salvation	Head	Accusation	Zechariah 3:1-5
Authorities	Breastplate of Righteousness	Heart	Temptation/Pride	1 Chronicles 21:1
Possessors	Belt of Truth	Groin	Lies/Deception	Genesis 3:1-6
Evil Spirits	Shoes of Peace	Feet	Oppression	Job

Rather than teaching systematically from either the head or feet, Rav Shaul began with (1) the Belt of Truth which is the groin, meant to protect against lies and deception; then (2) the Breastplate of Righteousness to protect against temptation and pride; (3) the Shoes of Peace to protect against oppression; and then (4) the Helmet of Salvation to protect against accusation.

The enemy attacks the weakest and most vulnerable parts first; then the stronger positions, once weaker ones have been taken. Rav Shaul notes the enemy first attacks the Truth, and that cataclysmic warfare has always been waged over what is "truth." Remember, the first thing haSatan did was to question YHWH's truth! Without a foundation in Truth, one is vulnerable to lies and deception, temptation, pride, oppression and accusation.

Belt of Truth

Putting on the Belt of Truth is the first defense of all "Spiritual Warfare." We study and observe Torah to know the Truth; our Spirits have been fashioned by YHWH so His Torah can fit into our hearts. Mashiyach Y'shua is the door whereby each soul enters into the Malchut (Kingdom) Elohim. Leaving behind the fallen world we become alive in the WORD of YHWH. We are called to enter into a living relationship with YHWH through His Mashiyach, who *"has rescued us from the dominion of darkness, to bring us into His Kingdom; by whom we have redemption and remission of sins: who* ***is the likeness of the invisible Elohim****, and the first-born of all creatures"* (Colossians 1:13-15). The *"likeness of the invisible Elohim"* is revealed in the attributes and the Word of YHWH revealed in us; these are the attributes of the "spiritual man." It is obedience to the Torah (Truth) that matures the spiritual attributes within us: *"And he knew them, previously; and he sealed them with the* ***likeness of the image of his Son****; that He might be the first-born of many brothers"* (Romans 8:29).

"But in these latter days, he has conversed with us, by his Son; whom he has constituted heir of all things, and by whom he made the worlds; who is the splendor of his glory, ***and the exact image of His nature****, and upholds all by the power of his Word; and by his Qnoma (Occurrence of the singular Divine Nature) he made a purification of sins, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"* (Hebrews 1:2, 3). The adversary tries to corrupt the *"image of his Son"* through religion and falsehood according to *"philosophy, and vain deception, according to the doctrines of men, according to the rudiments of the world…"* The Belt of Truth defends against deception.

According to Scripture all Truth comes from YHWH: *"And YHWH passed by before him, and proclaimed, YHWH, YHWH Elohim, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and* ***abundant in goodness and truth****, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."* (Sh'mot/Exodus) 34:6-7). The Levites, along with all the Children of Israel, declared; *"You came down also upon Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right judgments, and* ***laws of truth****, good statutes and commandments"* (Nehemiah 9:13). Dawid said; *"The Fear of YHWH is clean,*

enduring for ever: ***the Judgments of YHWH are true*** *and righteous altogether"* (Psalm 19:9). *"Into your hand I commit my spirit: You have redeemed me,* ***O YHWH Elohim of truth"*** (Psalm 31:5). *"****O send out your light and your truth****: let them lead me; let them bring me unto your set apart hill, and to your tabernacles"* (Psalm 43:3). *"For your mercy is great above the heavens: and your* ***truth reaches unto the skies"*** (Psalm 108:4). *"Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and* ***your torah*** *(instruction in righteousness)* ***is the truth"*** (Psalm 119:142). *"You are near, O YHWH; and* ***all your mitzvot*** *(commandments)* ***are truth"*** Psalm 119:151

According to Scripture the Torah (instructions in righteousness), Judgments and Commandments of YHWH are ***Truth and Light***. Malachi wrote, *"The* ***Torah*** *(instruction in righteousness)* ***of truth*** *was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Torah at his mouth: for he is the messenger of YHWH Tsvaot (of Hosts). But you are departed out of the way; you have caused many to stumble at the Torah"* (Malachi 2:6-8). Many false priests today are causing people to stumble at the Torah, and many Christian and Jewish traditions are violently opposed to Torah. *"Y'shua answered and said to them, Why also do you transgress against the commandments of Elohim because of your traditions?"* (Matthew 15:3) On behalf of those entering into the Malchut Elohim, Y'shua prayed, "***Father sanctify them by your Truth, for Your Word is Truth***" (John 17:17).

When we put on the Belt of Truth, (the Torah) YHWH promises to go before us and give us victory. When the Ark of the Covenant moved forward, YHWH went before His people and Moshe would say, *"Arise YHWH! May Your enemies be scattered! Let those who hate you flee before you!" And when the Ark stopped Moshe said, "Return, YHWH of the many, many thousands of Israel!"* (B'midbar/Numbers 10:35, 36). Those who love YHWH and His Mashiyach live according to Torah. The Eser HaDibrot (Ten Words or Commandments) reveal the Mind of Mashiyach; this is the Truth which YHWH has revealed to His people because "***The Torah of YHWH is perfect converting the Soul***" (Psalm 19:7).

The first strategy of haSatan is to make void the Torah, which he does by whittling it down with religious traditions. Many are being taught that Torah is irrelevant for today, or that it is spiritualized or modernized in such a manner that it has been made obsolete by man's religion. Putting on the Belt of Truth means to observe the Torah of YHWH each day and becoming a "new creation" in Him; it is the first and foremost defense against the enemy. We must seek YHWH and allow the Ruach haKodesh to write Torah upon our hearts. This is what Jeremiah 31:31-34 refers to as the Brit Chadasha (renewed covenant). We are to put on the Belt of Truth and enter into YHWH's Shabbat and keep all the Commandments that Y'shua Mashiyach himself observed.

The Truth of the "spiritual man" is also revealed within the attributes of YHWH. *"The Spirit of YHWH shall rest upon him, the Spirit of* ***Chochmah*** *(Wisdom) and* ***Binah*** *(Understanding), the Spirit of* ***Atzah*** *(Counsel) and* ***Gevurah*** *(Might), the Spirit of* ***Da'at*** *(Knowledge) and of the* ***Yirah*** *(Fear) of YHWH"* (Yeshayahu/Isaiah 11:2). These seven spirits depict Mashiyach and we are reminded by the seven branched menorah of the completion or perfection of Mashiyach that is to be an eternal light within the souls of all men and women.

"Yours, O YHWH, is the ***Gedulah*** *(Greatness), the* ***Gevurah*** *(Power) and the* ***Teferet*** *(Glory) the* ***Natzach*** *(Victory) and the* ***Hod*** *(Majesty) the* ***Kingdom*** *(M'lakah)"* (1 Chronicles 29:11). Here we see the government of Mashiyach revealed, which in the Perfection of Beauty also judges every other authority as to whether it is of Mashiyach or not. *"I YHWH lay in Zion for a* ***Yesod*** *(foundation), a stone, a tried stone, a sure* ***Yesod*** *(foundation*)" (2 Chronicles 20:21). The perfect stone, the tried stone is the foundation of Life itself; it is the Truth of Mashiyach!

"His ***Chesed*** *(Mercy) endures forever."* (Isaiah 28:16). The Attributes of YHWH are all revealed through Mashiyach as the TRUTH of YHWH. Not only are we to recognize and "know Him" by these attributes, but our own natures are to become transformed according to His nature.

As the branches of the Menorah attach to a central pillar, so is each of the unique attributes of YHWH connected and revealed in Mashiyach who is "heir of all things." Truth provides the correct understanding of YHWH and His Word. It is the foundation of Faith but it also reveals the nature of mankind. *"Elohim created man in his own **tselem** (image), in **b'tselem Elohim** (the image of Elohim) created he him; male and female created he them"* (Genesis 1:27). Truth tells us that every human has an inherent *neshama* (spirit) that was designed and breathed into him by YHWH.

*"And the **tsela** (rib), which YHWH Elohim had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man"* (Beresheet/Genesis 2:22). ***Tsela*** also means **side** or **chamber**; even as a "side" of man was used to make woman, a "side" of Elohim was used to make man. As the male and female species are dependent on each other for life, so are all living beings dependent upon YHWH. YHWH placed a "portion" of Himself into each soul, allowing each one the "Elohim-like" potential of living according to Truth. The Torah (Truth) reveals YHWH and His Mashiyach; and Truth reveals the Government of Mashiyach that brings Justice, Righteousness, Equality, Community, Peace, Love, etc. But, all false "Messiahs" are anti-Torah, bringing enslavement to counterfeit religions that deceive souls into the bondage of men rather than freedom in Mashiyach.

Y'shua teaches, *"And you will know the truth and that truth will set you free"* (John 8:21, 32). Truth and Torah have always been considered as one and the same. Y'shua declares, *"And then I will profess to them that from everlasting, I have not known you. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity"* (Matthew 7:23). "Workers of iniquity" are they who break Torah and teach others to do the same. *"And because of the growth of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold"* (Matthew 24:12). *"For the mystery of the Evil One already begins to be operative: and only, if that which now hinders shall be taken from the midst; then at length will that Evil One be revealed; whom our Master Y'shua will consume by the breath of his mouth, and will bring to nothing by the visibility of his coming. For the coming of that [Evil One], is the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all the deceptiveness of iniquity, in them that perish; because they did not receive the love of the truth, by which they might have life"* (2 Thessalonians 2:7-10). The love of the truth is demonstrated by the action of truth which is the visible nature of Mashiyach within his followers.

In summary, Torah qualifies and reveals Mashiyach and the Spirit of Mashiyach is the foundational truth of the Malchut Elohim; therefore, we enter into the Renewed Covenant when we allow Torah to be written upon our hearts, by observing and doing the Commandments. Y'shua demonstrated this to his Disciples and to all people; consequently, putting on the Belt of Truth means to live by ***"every Word that proceeds from the mouth of YHWH"*** (Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4).

Breastplate of Righteousness

Putting on the Breastplate of Righteousness protects us from tactics of pride and temptation. The adversary is referred to as "the Tempter" in Matthew 4:3, and our defense against his temptations is to invite YHWH to direct our thoughts according to His Righteousness, which is imparted by Grace to those who seek and surrender to Him.

Torah is defined as instruction or erudition in righteousness: *"All Scripture that was written by the Spirit, is profitable for instruction, and for confutation, and for correction, and for erudition in righteousness"* (2 Timothy 3:16). Putting on the Breastplate of Righteousness is to allow YHWH Tsidkenu (our Righteousness) help us to take captive every unclean thought and to stand our ground against the enemy.

Blessed is the man who endures temptations; so that when he is proved he may receive a crown of life, which Elohim has promised to them that love him" (Ya'akov/James 1:12).

"But let us who are children of the day, be wakeful in mind, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and take the helmet of the hope of life" (1 Thessalonians 5:8).

Shoes of Peace/Shalom

Putting on the Shoes of Peace defends against oppression. The "Shoes of Peace" hint of proactively bringing the Truth of YHWH to those who are being called into the Kingdom of Elohim. Shalom (peace) also means unity, to be whole or complete and therefore "at peace." Job was at peace with YHWH. When haSatan attacked him with oppression it was to no avail; as a matter of fact it simply strengthened him: *"YHWH blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning."*

The Hebrew word *na'al* (shoe) comes from a root meaning to lock, bolt, enclose or to shut up. As shoes provide protection for our feet so we can go places without injury, so does peace guard our freedom of movement. The enemy would prefer that YHWH's people are oppressed and their movement is restricted, whereas putting on the Shoes of Peace is to enable our freedom in Mashiyach to help bring others into the Kingdom of Elohim, freeing others from the slavery of sin. There are no static elements within the spiritual world; everything is always dynamic. If we don't continually move towards our goal, the forces of evil will slide us backward. *"He that follows after righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness, and honor. A wise man scales the city of the mighty, and casts down the strength of the confidence thereof"* (Proverbs 21:21, 22). A wise soul is always proactively taking down the strongholds of the enemy, always helping others reach their potential and always seeking alliances with others to help win victories for Mashiyach.

Mashiyach demonstrated how to put on the Shoes of Peace – which represent life in Mashiyach, bringing the Good News and Blessings of YHWH to others as we serve with humility, righteousness and love.

Helmet of Salvation

The Helmet of Salvation protects us from accusation in our most vulnerable component of thought. *"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose **yetser** (imagination) is stayed on You…"* (Isaiah 26:3). The ***yetser*** (imagination) must be cognitively and spiritually protected at all times from all vain, unclean thoughts and fantasies because the enemy cannot bring accusation against a mind that is Set Apart to YHWH. *"For minding the things of the flesh is death; but minding the things of the Spirit is life and peace"* (Romans 8:6).

"But let us who are children of the day, be wakeful in mind, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and take the helmet of the hope of life" (1 Thessalonians 5:8). When our thoughts are set on YHWH all components of Spiritual Warfare become activated as a defense and empowerment to advance the Kingdom of Elohim. As it is written: *"The eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, that which Elohim has prepared for those who love him. But Elohim has revealed it to us, by his Spirit; for the Spirit explores all things, even the profound things of Elohim"* (1 Corinthians 2:9, 10). Mankind is made in the *"likeness of Elohim"* therefore when our thoughts are trained and focused in Mashiyach our spiritual man experiences the profound things of Elohim. In this way we are "more than conquerors," because even death is defeated!

When Rav Shaul exhorts us pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17) he refers to the ongoing conversation between us and the Almighty YHWH. This dialogue with the Ruach haKodesh gives guidance and direction every moment of the day. Our thoughts, words and actions will serve to either bring us closer to YHWH or keep us apart from Him. When our thoughts are in YHWH we enter into the *"Secret Place of the Most High"* (Psalm 91:1) where the *shaida* (demons) are defeated. *"Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place. Give unto YHWH, you kindreds of the people, give unto YHWH glory and strength. Give unto YHWH the glory due unto His Name: bring an offering, and come before Him: worship YHWH in the beauty of being Set Apart. Fear before Him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, YHWH reigns"* (1 Chronicles 16:27-31).

The Ex-Nihilo (Out of Nothing) Theory

Old Syriac

Dr. George M. Lamsa states: "The so-called 'Old Syriac' manuscript of the four Gospels, known as the Siniatic Palimpset, discovered by Mrs. Agnes Lewis in the Convent of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai in 1892, unfortunately was forged by the Monks, deliberately so, before it was sold to Mrs. Lewis and her companions. They made a hole in the date of the manuscript, thus apparently increasing its age by 900 years. The work was actually finished in the year 1599 CE. The English scholars who examined it first, placed its date as of 697 CE then, not being sure, they made a second inspection, and assigned to it a later date, at 778 CE. Dr. Burkitt (then a young student), at the time of the discovery, thought that the hole in the date was natural, that is, in the skin when dated. He failed to realize that no responsible scribe would date a manuscript near a hole in such a way as to leave the reader in doubt as to the exact date."

"The above mentioned error in date recently was discovered by the writer, after examining several other Four-Gospel manuscripts which were brought to America from the Near East. All the owners of these manuscripts had used the same malpractice. They had made it appear from the mutilated dates that the manuscripts were one thousand years older than they actually were. One of these manuscripts is at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, another is at Harvard, and another is in Syria."

"'Palimpset' means double writing, or one writing over the other. The superwriting in Aramaic, on the vellum of the so-called Siniatic, was the story of martyrology. One of the stories is that of Saint Augenia, believed to be a European Saint never heard of in the East. This book evidently was introduced by the Roman Catholic missionaries after the union of the Chaldeans with the Church of Rome in the sixteenth century. The work underlying the super-writing is that of a student who copied the Gospels for penmanship. No laymen or priest would destroy a sacred text of the Four Gospels just to write a history of the Saints. Such an act would be considered sacrilegious. Other Palimpset texts of this nature, including the so-called Curetonian, are of late origin and are not authentic. They were never used by Christians of the Church of the East."

"Many forged manuscripts, scrolls, and fake tablets have been brought to America and Europe. They generally are produced in Egypt and Iraq. Stone tablets and engraved and buried in the fields, and clay tablets are made similar to those made by the Assyrians. The work is so cleverly done that oftentimes even the experts are confused and deceived. Moreover, genuine tablets may be rejected because the archaeologists doubt their authenticity. Some years ago the writer received about two hundred tablets from a member of Turkish parliament who had purchased them in Constantinople. They were first regarded as a great discovery, but later were rejected as fakes. The writer reported this malpractice to Cambridge University, and received confirmation of such fraud. The writer also took the matter up with Dr. Hatch of the Episcopal Seminary in Cambridge, Massachusetts. We made a study of the ink used in the manuscripts. After the writing ages for several weeks it cannot be washed off. However, it can be removed in a short time after it is written. Therefore, in the East, Palimpset documents and revisions are rejected as sacred literature. They are never used in the churches."

"If this practice of forging manuscripts had been known earlier, there would not have been any confusion as to the origin of the Peshitta. Western scholars would have realized that neither the Siniatic Palimpset nor the Curetonian are authentic manuscripts of the Scriptures. These were forged and used by heretical sects which tried to deny the divinity of Y'shua. Some of them are works of the students who copied manuscripts for penmanship practice." (Dr. George M. Lamsa, "New Testament Origin", p. 89-91 1947) [67]

67 George Lamsa was a native Aramaic speaker reared in the Middle East and steeped in the tradition of the ancient Church of the East that preserved the Peshitta collection. Lamsa was well qualified both liturgically and scholarly to comment on the practices he knew so very well. However, as a theologian, Lamsa had liberal theological notions such as unbelief in demons that affected many areas of his translation. Therefore, this quote is simply an acknowledgment of his ability as a commentary, and not an endorsement of his religious views.

Dr. Lamsa is a controversial figure primarily because of his tendency to allow his liberal theological biases to infect his translation. Others directly question certain details of the role he ascribes to himself in this instance. Nevertheless, the main point Dr. Lamsa makes cannot be refuted: Middle Eastern scribes would never scratch off the original Word of Elohim and substitute the biography of a saintly legend over top of it.

In response to this obvious truth, Siniaticus proponents have tried to suggest that perhaps the original manuscript was defective and, since vellum was kind of scarce, they simply re-used it. However, even this scenario is fraught with problems. In the Middle East, and especially in Israel, sacred manuscripts would never be "recycled" in such a horrific manner. If the texts of a Torah scroll, for instance, were defective, they would have been destroyed. If the text or manuscript materials were degraded, then a new copy would have been made and the old one would again be destroyed. There are records of rabbis "burying the Torah" or giving the old manuscript a kind of funeral, because its degradation had rendered it imperfect for daily use.

As for the Peshitta, it was preserved by the Assyrian people who, in addition to having close ethnic ties with Jews, had adopted Messianic Judaism and still retain much of those sensibilities even to this day. Therefore, if the manuscript of the "original Siniaticus" were defective, it would never have been scratched off and written over.[68]

Finding the Hand of Revision

The biggest evidence against the Siniaticus is, in fact, textual in nature. For example, the Siniaticus version of Matthew 1:16 reads "her betrothed" instead of *gowra* in Matthew 1:16, which is clearly an effort to bring itself more in line with the majority Greek rendering of "her husband."

Let's investigate a few examples from these two traditions and see who really revised from whom. The alleged revision is supposed to have been done to make the Peshitta more in line with the Imperial Byzantine Greek text. Let's compare both Peshitta and Siniaticus with that Greek family of manuscripts.[69]

> "These things happened in **Beth-Abara**[70] on the other side of the Jordan"
> (John 1:28 Byzantine Text and Siniaticus).
> "These things happened in **Beth-Anya** on the other side of the Jordan"
> (John 1:28 Eastern Peshitta).

Beth-Anya is better known as *Bethany,* a city two miles outside of Jerusalem, and also known as the hometown of Y'shua's friend Lazarus (John 11:1). By contrast no city named *Beth-Abara* (place of the other side) has ever been found. The Peshitta preserves the original name of a real city and the Siniaticus and Byzantine texts do not; the latter traditions misread the original. First, on the Greek side, the redactor of the Byzantine text probably skipped over a couple Aramaic words thusly:

> "**These things happened in Beth** *Anya on the* **Abara (other side) of the Jordan."**

Then, with his work now completed, the Greek redactor would have simply put the Aramaic text

68 While the Monks of Saint Catherine's were most certainly not Assyrians, but of Greek ethnicity, the theory that Siniaticus-primacists hold to is that the Peshitta was revised from it. Therefore, somehow the Siniaticus, or perhaps another copy of it, would have made its way into the hands of the Church of the East. Once there, the "original" Word of Elohim would have been altered and the vessel it came in either defaced or destroyed. For that reason, the habits of the Middle Eastern scribes that would have done this deed are still very much on point. It is also the case that if another had scratched the text off before the Church of the East officials had a chance to look at it, they would, without a doubt, have immediately dismissed the document as an obvious fraud.

69 The source for the Aramaic texts of the Siniaticus, Harkalean (Western Aramaic revision of 616) and Peshitta readings is from George Kiraz's monumental work "A Comparative Edition of the Syriac Gospels" whereas the translation of those texts was done by Paul Younan.

70 This is also the root of the word "Hebrew". Jews and Arameans had settled on opposite sides of the Jordan, and so the Arameans called their Semitic brethren "those from across" (Hebrews).

aside and never gave the reading a second thought. Next, when his text passes to the Old Syriac Aramaic scribe, he simply transliterates into his language the phrase preserved in the Greek. Granted though, it is possible to suggest that the Aramaic scribe could have also skipped over *"Anya on the"* as well, but this is less likely, since an Aramaic speaker would be less prone to error in his native language. Instead, the error the Old Syriac scribe makes is far subtler:

> "These things happened in **Beth-Abara** (בית עברה)" (John 1:28).
> "Go down ahead of the Midianites…down to **Beth-Bara** (בית ברה)" (Judges 7:24).

The two names are nearly identical but for the use of a ע. Notice they are both placed in almost the exact location as well. Therefore, with the Greek reflecting a minor transliteration variant and given the fact the geography also seemed accurate, there would have been no reason for the Old Syriac scribe to question the Byzantine reading. Even if he did, though, the scribe still could have attributed the variant spelling to either that of a different Aramaic dialect or else a transliteration scheme in Greek of taking on an "a" at the beginning, which was also commonplace.

Here are a couple pairs from Luke:

> "Y'shua himself stood among them and said, 'Peace be to you'"
> (Luke 24:36b Byzantine Text and Siniaticus).
> "Y'shua himself stood among them and said, 'Peace be to you'"
> **It is I, don't be afraid**'" (Luke 24:36b Eastern Peshitta).

> "And that repentance **and** remission of sins should be preached"
> (Luke 24:47 Byzantine Text and Siniaticus).
> "And that repentance **for** remission of sins should be preached"
> (Luke 24:47 Eastern Peshitta).

Again, who is showing redaction from whom? Did the Peshitta scribe, while doing his best to agree with Byzantine, just decide to get creative and add a phrase? Moving on, we see the same problem in Mark:

> "When evening had come, **he** would go outside the city"
> (Mark 11:19 Byzantine Text and Siniaticus).
> "When evening had come, **they** went outside the city."
> (Mark 11:19 Eastern Peshitta).

> **"And** many things had suffered of many physicians…"
> (Mark 5:26 Byzantine Text and Siniaticus).
> "**Whom** had suffered many things of many physicians…"
> (Mark 5:26 Eastern Peshitta).

This last reading in Mark is quite interesting, since there is no real reason for the "Peshitta revisers" to change the "original" text from a waw proclitic (and) to a dalet proclitic (whom), when the meaning is the same. Other deep differences between the Peshitta and Old Syriac versions of this passage need to be shown with the actual Aramaic text:[71] "The Peshitta could **not** be a revision of the "Old-Syriac" in favor of the Greek reading of Mark 5:26. I cannot even fathom a direct relationship between the Peshitta and OS, unless the translators of the "Old-Syriac" had referenced the Peshitta. That's about the only relationship I can even imagine. The supposed revisers of the Peshitta had no reason to include and change the Proclitic to a Proclitic " (Paul Younan)

Therefore, if the Peshitta had been designed to agree with the Greek, as some posture, it seems to be a very selective agreement indeed. In other places, agreement between the Peshitta and the most ancient Greek readings go *against* the Old Syriac manuscripts, since the latter obviously came on to the scene rather late, after the most reliable readings had been established.

71 By these I am referring to the Eastern Peshitta manuscripts, which are the same but for minor spelling variants. The Western Peshitto-Harkalean tradition, which includes adulterated readings such as Acts 20:28 and Hebrews 2:9, is not included in this group.

The reader may then well ask how such a situation can be possible, whereby both agreement and disagreement with the Greek texts are taken as evidence of Peshitta Primacy. The answer is that it solely depends on case-by-case examples. For example, Matthew 1:16-19,[72] is a situation where an obvious mistranslation of the entire Greek record, Old Syriac, and the Hebrew versions of Matthew arose from the only possible place for a correct and original reading, mainly the Peshitta text. Therefore, the consistent and early misreading in the Greek record serves as powerful proof that the only source it could have been mistranslated from must be older than the earliest Greek documents, meaning prior to the Second Century.

On the other hand, if we find a very odd reading in either Old Syriac or the late medieval Hebrew Matthew manuscripts, and that odd variant cannot be explained by a mistranslation, then issues of antiquity, multiple attestation of a reading and numbers of extant manuscripts must come into play (odd readings were either chosen from multiple meaning Aramaic words, or by confusing two Aramaic words that are spelled the same but have different meanings). What we have then to compare with is five manuscripts with no concordance, compared to three hundred and sixty (360) Peshitta manuscripts with complete codices from the fourth to ninth centuries, that are virtually identical![73] Furthermore, the variances between Peshitta and the Greek are easily explainable within the framework suggested above, as opposed to some very strange baseless readings from Old Syriac. It is because of complexities like these that we must investigate a good number of comparative examples, so that the collective evidence can speak for itself.

True Origins of Old Syriac Revealed

A majority of scholars believe that the Old Syriac was translated from a Greek source known as Codex Bezae, which would have been used as a base text by Rabulla, a Fifth Century bishop in the Syrian Orthodox Church.[74] Here is an example that explains the prevalence of this viewpoint:

In Matthew 9:34, 12:24 and Luke 11:15, the Peshitta contains the phrase: The Pharisees were saying, "By the head of the demons, he casts out demons."

In so doing, the Peshitta not only agrees with the Byzantine Greek, but also the earlier Western text-type, and even ancient Latin versions. However, the "original" OS manuscripts omit this phrase in all three places for a very simple reason: Their original source, the Greek Codex Bezae, is also the only text to *not* have this phrase! Also, the Old Syriac manuscripts only contain the exact same completed books that Codex Bezae does, namely the four Gospels, and it follows this Greek version almost exactly, word for word. Finally, even the later medieval Hebrew manuscripts like Dutillet and Shem Tob, which are frequently reconstructed with the OS Group to recover the "original" contain the exact reading that the Peshitta does *against* the Old Syriac.

Furthermore, in the Greek New Testament tradition, many different kinds of mistakes happened because the Greek redactor did not have the careful textual tradition that his Semite counterparts did. One of these types of mistakes is technically called by the Greek name *homioteleution* ("like-ending"). It means that there is a phrase in between two words that is left out inadvertently when a copyist's eye jumped from the first "like word" to the next "like word." It is actually a very common error in Greek manuscripts. Now, take look at the Byzantine Greek reading of Mark 6:33 shown below:

> **και** ειδου αμτους υπαγοντας και επεγνωσαν πολλοι, **και** πεζη απσ πασων των πολυεων αυνεδραμον εκει και προηλθον αυτους. Και.

72 My source for the comparisons between the Old Syriac manuscripts and the Peshitta is the monumental work of Dr. George A. Kiraz, *Comparative Edition of the Syriac Gospels*. Dr. Kiraz has made sure that there are three readings for any part of the Gospels. Since Cureton and Siniaticus are each missing large parts of the Gospels, Dr. Kiraz will augment the Peshitta and the Old Syriac existing reading with the Harkalean revision of the Peshitta done in 616. By contrast, in places where the both the Cureton and Siniaticus share a reading, only the Peshitta is added.

73 This evidence is documented extensively in The Path to Life essay, p. 20-24, available at: www.aramaicnttruth.org

74 See An Old Syriac Reading of Acts 1:4 and More Light on Y'shua' Last Meal before His Ascension; Daniel L. McConaughy; Oriens Christianus; Band 72; 1988; pp. 63-67.

There are two textual traditions here which differ in the Greek ("Byzantine" vs. "Western"). The Byzantine reading is shown above. The "Western" reading omits the phrase between the two underlined words. The reason is that the copyist's eye jumped from the first "kai" ("and") to the second, leaving out "and preceded them." Now when we compare the Peshitta with Old Syriac, the Old Syriac is missing the phrase ܘܩܕܡ ܗܘܘ ܪܗܛܝܢ ܩܕܡܝܗܘܢ, or "and they ran before them", which the Peshitta contains. This demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt that Old Syriac is a revision of the Peshitta to bring it into more agreement with the "Western" Greek manuscripts which were in common use at the time in Egypt and elsewhere "West".

Moving on, Mark 12:23 in the Imperial Byzantine Greek adds the gloss "when they shall rise" to the text: *"In the resurrection therefore, **when they shall rise**, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.*" (KJV) Put simply, if the Peshitta is a revision of the Old Syriac to bring it more into line with the Byzantine text, then why would the Peshitta not contain this gloss - but the Old Syriac does - ܒܙܒܢ ܩܡ, "when they shall rise"?

Here's another example:

Peshitta:
ܟܝܢܐ ܕܐ ܟܝܪܘܬܐ ܕܡ ܫܒܥ ܐܢܫܐ ܕܐ ܟܝܢ ܩܛܠ ܟܝܢ ܐܬܬܗ ܠܗ ܟܝ
Old Syriac (Siniaticus)
ܟܝܢܐ ܕܐ ܟܝܪܘܬܐ ܕܡ ܫܒܥ ܐܢܫܐ ܕܐ ܟܝܢ ܩܛܠ ܟܝܢ ܐܬܬܗ (ܠܗ) ܟܝ

In Mark 13:7 we find the phrase "wars and rumors of revolutions" inserted in two places. The interesting thing is that there are two different words in the Aramaic but only one word in the Greek (actually there is a suffix change but basically the same word). The Byzantine/Majority Text has *polemos* and *polemon* while the Aramaic has *qrawa* and *qarsa*. With regards to *qrawa*, this is a genuine Aramaic word. However, the word *qarsa* is a Greek loan word according to the legendary scholar R. Payne Smith. This becomes an important observation here, because the Old Syriac uses the Greek loanword in *both* places whereas the Peshitta uses two different words! Or, to put it another way, the Old Syriac reads the exact same way as the Greek version from which it's translated. This is yet another example that proves that the idea of Peshitta being a revision of the Old Syriac to bring it in line with the Byzantine Greek text is preposterous.

Luke 23:48

Sometimes, however, when the Peshitta does have the same reading as the Byzantine Text, it is because that reading is almost universally attested to in all the Greek textual families, with the Peshitta lending its voice in agreement. The Old Syriac then, is literally left virtually alone with a spurious reading. In Luke 23:48 the Old Syriac curiously includes this interpolation after *beating upon their breasts*: *"and saying: 'Woe to us! What has befallen us? Woe to us from our sins!"*

This reading, absent in Peshitta, the Greek traditions, and Dutillet and Shem Tob Hebrew versions, can only be found in 2 other manuscripts:

- Codex Sangermanensis - a 9th century Latin Vulgate manuscript
- The Apocryphal Greek Gospel of Peter

Acts 1:4

Sometimes mistranslations produce results that are both funny and ridiculous. For example, in some early Greek manuscripts as well as the Old Syriac Acts 1:4 reads, "and he ate salt." The Peshitta, however, has "and he ate bread." Does this mean that the earliest Greek manuscripts may be reflecting a more original Old Syriac reading? Hardly!

The Greek phrase in the Alexandrian text reads *kai sunalizomenus* (και συναλιζο). Now, with a long "a" *sunalizomenu* was used in Classical and Hellenistic Greek to mean "collect or assemble". With a short "a" *sunalizomenu* means literally "to eat salt together." Leaving aside momentarily

the issues that a clearer reading is possible even within the Greek, and the fact that the Peshitta also has a better reading, let's digress to show the error of some scholars when they throw out the obvious to embrace the extremely unlikely.

For example, according to Bruce Metzger the meaning "to eat salt together" is a rare and late meaning of the Greek word, which did not appear until the end of the Second Century CE. Most of the early versions do take the word to refer to eating (The Old Latin, the Latin Vulgate; the Coptic, the Armenian, the Ethiopic and the Armenian for example). About thirty-five late Greek manuscripts read alternately *sunaulizomenos* "to spend the night with."

On the Aramaic side, Dr. Daniel L. McConaughy has noted that the Ancient Aramaic "Church Father" Ephraim, early Fourth Century, quotes the passage in Aramaic in his Hymns on Virginity, hymn 36. This is very important to the Old Syriac Primacist scholars because they believe that Ephraim's quotations from the Gospels often agree with the Old Syriac against the Peshitta text, and because Ephraim uses the word ܡܠܚܐ, which they render "salted" or "ate salt".

As a result, McConaughy suggests that this is the lost Old Syriac reading which would refer to an ancient Semitic custom of eating salt together in ritual meals (Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5).[75] The confusion was also understandable, proponents of this theory point out, due to the similarity between the words for "salt" (*melkh*--ܡܠܚ) and "bread" (*lechem*-- ܠܚܡ).

However, this false premise is easy to disprove, since Dr. McConaughy believes that eating salt is an "ancient Semitic custom," let's review some his references to see if this makes any sense:

> *"All these sacred gifts that the Israelites set aside for YHWH I give to you, to your sons, and to the daughters that are with you, as a due for all time. It shall be an* ***everlasting covenant of salt*** *before YHWH for you and your offspring as well"* (Numbers 18:19).
>
> *"Surely you know that YHWH Elohim of Israel gave David kingship over Israel* ***forever--to him and his sons--by a covenant of salt****"* (2 Chronicles 13:5).

Decide for yourself, do these passages say Jews ate salt? It is the "salt covenant" that appears in both quotes, a Hebrew metaphor for "everlasting." However, there is one more verse where "salt covenant" appears:

> *"You shall season your every meal offering with salt; you shall not omit from your meal offering the* ***salt of your covenant with Elohim****; with all offerings you must offer salt*" (Leviticus 2:13).

Notice here that Jews are *not* eating salt, but using it for the offering. Parts of the offering were eaten by both priests and petitioner however, people are not sitting down to eat salt! Since "salt" only appears 29 times in the entire Tanakh, it is easy to investigate. The remaining references are all generic and the word "covenant" does not appear:

- The "salt sea", (Genesis 14:3; Numbers 34:3, 12; Deuteronomy 3:17; Joshua 3:16; 12:3; 15:2, 5; 18:19)
- Lot's wife turning into a pillar of salt, (Genesis 19:26)
- "Salt and brimstone" and Sodom and Gomorrah, (Deuteronomy 29:23)
- The "City of Salt" (Joshua 15:62)
- Abimelech sows an enemy city with salt so crops will not grow (Judges 9:45)
- "The Valley of Salt"
  (2 Samuel 8:13; 2 Kings 14:4; 1 Chronicles 18:12, 25:11; Psalm 60:1)

75 It is also fair to point out that the term "high priest" is not even applied to the first Levitical priest, Aaron. Rather, the specific office of high priest seems to have been a distinction made about four centuries later. However, even if technically speaking Aaron did act as a high priest, it still does not invalidate the proposition that by David's time the bifurcation of titles had been in place for some time. Furthermore, Aaron also has no bearing on the central point of my argument, which is that the high priest in this instance is not named and that such an omission is hardly uncommon.

- Salt used to bless the waters and heal the land (2 Kings 2:20-21)
- Salt again used to season sacrifices (Ezra 6:9, 7:22, Ezekiel 43:24)
- A general reference to salt being used to season other foods (Job 6:6)
- "salt land" as wilderness (Jeremiah 17:6, Ezekiel 47:11)

Nowhere is there any "Semitic custom" of Jews gathering to eat salt. By contrast, the ritual of all Semites getting together to "break bread" need hardly be mentioned!

However, as bad as the Tanakh is twisted by the pro Old-Syriac theory, the grammar errors are much worse. The fact is, *atemelkh* (ܐܬܡܠܟ) does *not* mean "salted" or "ate salt." The *melkh* (ܡܠܟ) root, a verb, cannot mean "salted" - an adjective! The same is true of "ate salt" which is an impossible reading grammatically, since to say "he ate salt" in Aramaic would be *akhel melkha* (ܟܚܠ ܡܠܟܐ). So instead of a plausible explanation for this theory residing in the similarity between the words for salt and bread, it turns out Aramaic grammar exposes the error. The reason is, ܐܬܡܠܟ is a verb that is conjugated in a form known as *ethpeel*, and in that form it clearly means, "it *was* salted." That reading, in turn leads us to a scribal error between: 1) ܐܬܡܠܟ (they ate salt) and 2) ܐܬܡܠܟ (they assembled, they deliberated, they took counsel). In other words, the Old Syriac scribe mistook a *khet* (ܕ) for a *kaph* (ܟ). Clearly, the Old-Syriac was translated from Greek, which has "and they assembled." By contrast, the Peshitta has "he ate bread" – and unlike both the Old Syriac and the Greek, the Peshitta makes sense, since they always ate **bread** together.

Finally, not all of what is believed to be from St. Ephraim's writings are really from his own hand. Most writings survive only in the Armenian and other non-Aramaic languages, and many of these retain a distinctly Western-Byzantine flavor. Mar Ephraim was known to paraphrase Scripture either to make a poetic or spiritual point. Therefore, while some instances may sound somewhat like one version or another, the totality of this evidence had absolutely no bearing on proving which textual tradition preceded the other.

The historical relationship between Peshitta,
Old Syriac manuscripts and the Diatessaron

Moving on, one of the most egregious falsehoods about the Peshitta text was that it was the product of an Edessan Bishop named Rabulla, in the early part of the Fifth Century. Basically the lie is outlined in this manner:

- In the middle of the Second Century, a man named Tatian combined the four Gospels into one work, the original of which was probably in Aramaic. He called it "the Diatessaron."
- Over the next 250 years, this combined work gained great popularity. Paper was scarce and a Lectionary of one unified account was a great boon to poor and struggling assemblies in the Middle East.
- Then, a Bishop named Rabulla came along and suppressed what he thought was the work of a heretic. Rabulla, determined to have a more acceptable version of the New Testament to take its place, is said to have crafted the Peshitta as we know it today.

The scholar who came up with this idea, Dr. F. Crawford Burkitt, admitted that it was only a guess. However, many uniformed people have passed down Burkitt's guess as a kind of sacred cow of western scholarship. The fact is, it is not, and the history of the matter will certainly bear Burkitt's speculation out to be a horrible lie.

Here are the facts:

- The Edessan group was separated from the Church of the East, and in fact was part of a rival assembly known as the Syrian Orthodox Church.
- Rabulla, as a Bishop in the Syrian Orthodox Church, was called "the heretic of Edessa" and "the devil" by the Church of the East because he was a Monophysite, which meant he only saw divine aspects to Messiah.

There was no way that the Church of the East would accept any writing from Rabulla and allow it to be called original Scripture! History, in fact, shows the opposite to be the case. The Church of the East resisted all efforts by the West to change their text, even to the point of death, and was ostracized by the Byzantines for their stubborn refusal to give up their ancient Semitic traditions and textual readings. So, when the Syrian Orthodox Church made their first revision to the Peshitta, the Church of the East rejected it. Then a second revision was done, and the same thing happened. So now, we are supposed to believe they just decided to accept the work of a hated enemy and call it straight from the pens of the apostles?

As a result, these two groups purposely began speaking with different accents, and even produced separate Aramaic scripts in order to prevent confusion as to which text came from where. However, the scholars who, in the 19th Century came to places like Urmia, could not tell the difference between Eastern originals and Western revisions because they only saw the latter and, decided to adopt its structure in their scholarship! They then, in their ignorance of history, began spinning wild stories.

Make no mistake about it, there was as much possibility of the Church of the East accepting a Peshitta from Rabulla, as there is of the Orthodox Jewish Beit Din in Jerusalem embracing a Tanakh authored by Adolph Hitler. However, Rabulla was very much involved in the production of another Aramaic work, and this "contribution" has created much confusion in the West ever since. A colleague of Rabulla, who authored an extensive biography of him shortly after his death, wrote:

> "By the wisdom of God that was in him he translated the New Testament from Greek into Syriac because of its variations, exactly as it was." (Rabul episcopi Edesseni, Baleei, aliorumque opera selecta, Oxford 1865, ed. J. J. Overbeck)

From this point, history shows that Rabulla, having made what he viewed as a definitive translation, purged all other variants from his domain, as related here:

> "The presbyters and deacons shall see to it that in all the churches a copy of the Evangelion de Mepharreshe shall be available and read." (Th. Zahn, Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons, i. (1881), p. 105.)

And so, what Rabulla really did was suppress the work of Tatian, which is why no complete copy of the Damkhalty (Aramaic for Diatessaron) survives. Rabulla gathered up the copies that had been in widespread use for about 250 years, made a huge bonfire, and burned them.[76]

We now shift our focus from history into linguistics. This term, "evangelion de mepharreshe," combines both Aramaic and Greek words into a single phrase meaning "separated Gospels." Through this, Rabulla was clearly trying to contrast his translation work of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John with that of the Diatessaron, which has combined the four into one literary work. Consequently, he eliminated as many copies of the Diatessaron as he could, and substituted it with his own translation. Then, all these centuries later, Western scholars enter the equation and claim, without evidence, that the evangelion de mepharreshe must be the Peshitta text.

Although Western scholarship completely rejects the Burkitt Hypothesis, sources like the Encyclopedia Britannica continue to spout his theory as if it were genuine history. For example, with respect to Burkitt, Arthur Voobus wrote:

> "This kind of reconstruction of textual history is pure fiction without a shred of evidence to support it." (Early Versions of the New Testament, Estonian Theological Society, 1954, see pp. 90-97)

Voobus, in fact, goes on to argue that Rabulla never even used the Peshitta at all![77] Furthermore,

76 See Han J. W. Drijvers, Journal of Early Christian Studies 4.2 (1996) pp. 235-248, Johns Hopkins University Press.

77 See Investigations into the Text of the New Testament used by Rabbula of Edessa, Pinneberg, 1947; Researches on the Circulation of the Peshitto in the Middle of the Fifth Century, Pinneberg, 1948; Neue Angeben Ueber, die Textgeschicht-

even Dr. Bruce Metzger, who may be the world's foremost Greek New Testament Primacist, agrees with Voobus and rejects Burkitt:

> "The question who it was that produced the Peshitta version of the New Testament will perhaps never be answered. That it was not Rabbula has been proved by Voobus' researches...In any case, however, in view of the adoption of the same version of the Scriptures by both the Eastern (Nestorian) and Western (Jacobite) branches of Syrian Christendom, we must conclude that it had attained a considerable degree of status before the division of the Syrian Church in AD 431." (Bruce M. Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, New York: Claredon, 1977, p. 36).

Since the Eastern and Western Aramaic groups hated each other with a passion, once again we see that one faction would never accept the Scripture of the other. On the other hand, we have the writings of Mar Aphrahat, a Fourth Century Syrian saint, who quotes exclusively from the Peshitta against both Old Syriac manuscripts.[78] But perhaps the most damning piece of evidence as to what Rabulla really did is contained in a place that nobody in western scholarship seems to have expected:

"Shlam Evangelion de Mepharreshe" (Here ends the Evangelion de Mepharreshe)

So here, finally, we find an ancient inscription on a document that actually claims to be Rabulla's evangelion de mephareshe. However, as it turns out, this is not the Peshitta text at all but, rather, a title that appears on nearly every page of Old Syriac Siniaticus! That's dozens of references to the unique term Rabulla coined for his work, whereas his title appears absolutely nowhere else on any other manuscript!

Greek Translations

The proliferation of Greek translations have provided us with the ability to both clarify the Greek and explain problematic readings, which ultimately serve to strengthen the claims of the Renewed Covenant writings as a whole. In that sense, the Greek translators deserve our praise and appreciation for making a noble attempt to bring the Galilean Aramaic dialect to the Greek speaking world - the results of which are spectacular in terms of influence and staying power.

Old Syriac however, translated by Greek-Orthodox redactors, was far less successful in this endeavor. The Aramaic is horrible; the grammar is atrocious and the spelling errors are copious. In fact, these very errors translated from the Greek caused a myriad of problems for those who thought it to be original. The reality is, they are simply cases of bad penmanship, with the correct reading being shared by both the Peshitta and the Greek. Also, none of these cases contain any hint that either the Greek or the Peshitta has an untenable or implausible reading. Below is a small sampling:

Matthew 5:29 Old Syriac: *"should go"*
Matthew 5:29 Peshitta & Greek: *"should fall"*

While the reading "go into Gehenna" and "fall into Gehenna" both seem reasonable, surely "falling" into an abyss or pit makes a lot more sense given the overall context of the passage. The word for "fall" also appears just a few lines later in the exact same form.

Matthew 23:16 Old Syriac: *"hurts not" and* *"sins"*
Matthew 23:16 Peshitta & Greek: *"nothing" and* *"is guilty"*

Here we have to see the full readings side by side to appreciate the error:

Zustande in Edessa in den Jahren ca. 326-340, Stockholm, 1951; and Early Versions of the New Testament. Stockholm, 1954.
78 An extensive study on this topic by Paul Younan uses Mar Aphrahat's Demonstrations of Faith as a primary source. The exclusive use of the Peshitta by this saint predates Rabulla's era by more than half a century.

> *"Woe to you blind guides, for you say that whoever swears by the Temple **does not hurt**, but he who swears by the gold by which is in the Temple **sins.**"* (Old Syriac)
> *"Woe to you blind guides, for you say that whoever swears by the Temple **is not anything**, but he who swears by the gold by which is in the Temple is **guilty.**"* (Peshitta)

Were the Pharisees confident that such a man did not *hurt* the Temple? The other variant, between "guilty" or "sins", is largely interchangeable.

> Matthew 14:27 *"But Y'shua at once spoke with them and said, "**Have courage**. It is I. Do not be afraid."*

On the Old Syriac side the Siniaticus has "be assured" while Cureton has "take courage". But the odd one here is Dutillet and Company with "have trust". In this case, they are likely targumming and the Aramaic as *haymanutha,* which can mean "trust" on occasion, but has a vast majority reading of "faith". However, and as this text proves, their "Peshitta memory" failed since it had another word for "courage" instead.

> Matthew 27:34 *"And they gave to him to drink **vinegar**, which was mixed with gall. And he tasted it and he did not desire to drink it."*

In this case, both Old Syriac manuscripts, the three of the late medieval Hebrew versions of Matthew, and the Greek families of texts all have "wine". Only the Peshitta has "vinegar", which is consistent with Tanakh: *"I am in despair. I hope for consolation but there is none, for comforters, but find none. They give me gall for food and vinegar to quench my thirst"* (Psalm 69:21-22).

All three statements in this Psalm relate perfectly to Mashiyach. He was in despair because he said that his own soul was troubled to the point of death (Matthew 26:38). The hope for consolation and comforters was due to the fact that he clearly wanted to get his time on the cross over with (Matthew 27:46). Finally, the key point in this analysis is that the Romans gave him the mixture of gall and vinegar and he did not want it because he believed his Father would soon answer his petition to end his suffering for the sake of the world.

> Mark 7:26 **"***Now that woman was a heathen from Phoenicia in **Syria**, and was entreating him to cast out the devil from her daughter."*

Here is a reading that was obscured in the Old Syriac, which calls this woman "a widow" due to another scribal error: ܣܘܪܝܐ (Syrian) ܐܪܡܠܬܐ (widow) The word in the Peshitta is more of a place name that she is from as opposed to a conjugation turning that place into personal description. Also note that the only way the Old Syriac could have come up with the "widow" variant is that it read "Syrian" in the Greek and then, when translating mis-wrote ܐܪܡܠܬܐ (widow), when it should have been ܐܪܡܝܬܐ (an Aramean/Syrian woman).

> Mark 8:12 **"***And he **sighed** in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign. Truly, I say to you, that not one sign will be given to this generation."*

The Old Syriac had an almost comical contrast, saying that Y'shua was "excited in his spirit" that people had misunderstood him yet again! How could that happen? The answer is very simple: ܐܫܬܚܐ (sighed) ܐܫܬܚܐ (excited) The Peshitta not only agrees with the Greek and in fact all other witnesses against the Old Syriac, it also makes a lot more sense!

> Mark 12:38 **"***And in his teaching he would say to them, "Beware of the scribes who like to **walk in long robes** and love a greeting in the streets."*

Obviously, this reading in both Peshitta and Greek makes a lot of sense since we know that scribes and Pharisees most certainly walked in long robes through the streets. The Old Syriac though misread ܒܣܝܬܐ (in robes) and thought it erroneously was ܒܣܝܦܐ (in porches).

Lest the reader think there may be some inconsistency in places where Greek readings are overturned in favor of Peshitta, I have only shown mistranslations from a Peshitta-exclusive term

that crept into the majority texts, and in many cases these clarify readings in the Greek that would otherwise be obscure or unintelligible. In still other cases, the readings between the Peshitta, Old Syriac and the Greek are quite close in meaning and have no probative value in proving an original reading:

Matthew 11:20 Old Syriac: ܕܒܗ ܥܒܕ ܣܓܝ̈ܐ *"in which he showed many mighty works"*
Matthew 11:20 Peshitta & Greek: ܕܥܒܕܘ ܒܗ ܣܓܝ̈ܐ ܗܘ̈ܘ *"in which his mighty works had been done"*
Matthew 21:24 Old Syriac: ܡܠܬܐ ܚܕܐ *"this word"*
Matthew 21:24 Peshitta & Greek: ܡܠܬܐ ܚܕܐ *"one word"*

In conclusion even if it could be shown that the Old Syriac Group (Cureton and Siniaticus) were originals, their fragmentary condition is such that not even both of them put together form the complete record. In that scenario, we have scraps of the Gospel texts against the *full Peshitta version* that is rendered *identically* in 360 complete manuscripts! We also have the force of ancient eastern traditions unanimously proclaiming Peshitta as original, even as these same groups denounced and almost destroyed one another. And yet, as volatile and dangerous as the relationship between the Church of the East and its rival Aramaic group the Syrian Orthodox Church has been, both defended the antiquity and originality of the Peshitta[79] and agree that the Siniaticus is nothing short of a pious fraud.

The Word of YHWH

The key to understanding the role of Mashiyach can be found within the attributes of the "Word" of YHWH. The ancients perceived the Word of YHWH to be none other than the Mashiyach and this is abundantly revealed in the term *memra.*

"The *memra* is not merely a linguistic device for overcoming the problem of biblical anthropomorphisms; it has theological significance in its own right. The (memra) is..."a world-permeating force, a reality in the world of matter or mind, the eminent aspect of God, holding all things under its omnipresent sway." (On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah" by Gershom Scholem pg 181-182)

The Memra

The Targums (Aramaic paraphrases of the Tanakh), which were commonly studied in synagogues along with the Hebrew Tanakh, provide clear insights into how the Word of YHWH was understood according to the ancients. The Targums substitute "The Word (Memra) of YHWH" for YHWH in places where it might appear as though YHWH is speaking to Himself. For example in Gen. 19:24 reads: *"And YHWH rained brimstone and fire upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, from YHWH, from the heavens."*

While Hebrew grammar indicates that one YHWH rains fire from another YHWH, the Targum Jonathan substitutes *"The Word of YHWH"* for the first of the two mentions of YHWH as follows: *"And the Word (Memra) of YHWH caused to descend upon the peoples of Sodom and Gommorah, brimstone and fire from YHWH in heaven."*

Another example is in Exodus 24:1: *"Now He (YHWH) said to Moshe, "come up to YHWH..."* But Targum Jonathan inserts "*Memra* (the Word) of YHWH" in place of "YHWH."

79 This is not to say that the COE and SOC do not have other disagreements about the text. The SOC revised at least two readings (Acts 20:28, Hebrews 2:9) to fit more in line with their different beliefs and also accepted five books that the COE did not. The point, however, is that the SOC and COE accept the Gospel of Matthew, which is our focus, as being IDENTICAL AND ORIGINAL IN BOTH THEIR TRADITIONS. Therefore, if the COE decided to use the Siniaticus to do a revised work later called "Peshitta", then there would be no way their enemies at the SOC would have ever accepted it, and vice versa!

It is very clear that the Targumists understood the "Word of YHWH" as the operational power of YHWH. According to Targum Onkelos, it was the Word of YHWH that Abraham trusted in according to Genesis 15:6: *"And Abraham trusted in the Word (Memra) of YHWH, and He counted it to him for righteousness."*

According to the Jerusalem Targum Genesis 22:14, Abraham prayed in the name of *the Word of YHWH: "And Abraham worshipped and prayed in the name of the Word (Memra) of YHWH, and said, "You are YHWH who does see, but You cannot be seen."* Abraham clearly prayed "in the name of the Word of YHWH" to YHWH who "cannot be seen." Here it is clear that one "aspect" of YHWH cannot be seen, but another can and, of course, this is Mashiyach.

This same principle is found in the Jerusalem Targum, Genesis 16:3: *"And Hagar praised and prayed in the name of the Word (Memra) Of YHWH who had revealed Himself to her."*

Targum Onkelos Gen. 28:20-21 states: *"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If the Word (Memra) of YHWH will be my support, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Word (Memra) of YHWH be my Elohim."*

The Targum for Psalm 62:9 indicates that David exhorted Israel to trust in the Word of Yah: *"Trust in the Word of Yah at all times, O people of the house of Israel! Pour out before Him the sighings of your heart; Say, Elohim is our trust forever."*

Targum Yonathan Gen. 1:27 states that the Word of YHWH is the Creator of mankind: *"And the Word (Memra) of YHWH created man in his likeness, in the likeness of YHWH, YHWH created, male and female created He them."*

The Jerusalem Targum for Exodus 3:14 states: *"And the Word (Memra) of YHWH said to Moses: "I am He who said unto the world 'Be!' and it was: and who in the future shall say to it 'Be!' and it shall be." And He said: "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'I Am' has sent me to you."*

The Fragmentary Targum for Exodus 12:42 also expresses the Word of YHWH as the Creator: *"The first night, when the "Word of YHWH" was revealed to the world in order to create it, the world was desolate and void, and darkness spread over the face of the abyss and the "Word of YHWH" was bright and illuminating and He called it the first night."*

That the Word of YHWH is the Creator is clearly recorded in Psalm 33:6: *"By the Word of YHWH were the heavens made, And all the hosts of them by the Spirit of His mouth."*

Targum Onkelos Genesis 9:17 states: *"And YHWH said to Noah, "This is the token of the covenant which I have established between My Word (Memra) and between all flesh that is upon the earth."* Clearly this is the Word of YHWH who made covenant in Noah's day with all flesh, and it is this same Word of YHWH who made covenant with Avraham in Genesis 17:7: *"And I will establish my covenant between My Word (Memra) and between you."*

The Word of YHWH also revealed the Torah to Moshe and established the covenant with Moshe and all of Yisrael. The Jerusalem Targum states, *"the Word of YHWH"* in Exodus 20:1.

Targum Jonathan for Genesis 49:18 states that Ya'akov turned to the Word of YHWH for salvation: *"Our father Jacob said: 'My soul does not wait for salvation such as that wrought by Gideon, the son of Joash, for that was but temporal; neither for a salvation like that of Samson, which was only transitory; but for that salvation which You have promised to come, through Your Word unto Your people, the children of Israel; for your salvation my soul hopes.'"*

The Word of YHWH is the referred to as the Savior as shown in Targum Jonathan Isaiah 45:17, 25: *"But Israel shall be saved by the Word of YHWH with an everlasting salvation by the Word of YHWH shall all the seed of Israel be justified."*

As well as Targum Jonathan for Hosea 1:7: *"But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and I will save them by the Word of YHWH, their Elohim."* Clearly it was very common knowledge within ancient Judaism that the Word of YHWH was and is the Mashiyach; therefore, when Yochanan used the term *Miltha* as referring to the Word (*Memra*) of YHWH we can see a connect between Mashiyach revealed as the Word of YHWH and Spirit of Mashiyach within Y'shua who came to this earth.

However, the way that the spirit was manifested contains details and subtleties that the original word of *Memra* was not intended to bring across. The reason is, while the technical lexical meaning of *Memra/devar* has always simply been *Word*, and while *Miltha* also shares that meaning, the fact is the Rabbinic use of the first few terms turned them into specialized meanings that tended to go away from other intended meanings of *Miltha*.

In other words, *Memra* – and to a lesser extent *devar* – was rabbinic terminology in the Targums and elsewhere was intended to downplay the physical aspects of YHWH with what we would sometimes term as the *parsopa* or *shekinah*. One of *Miltha's* many other meanings on top of Word is more related to the concept of emanation, manifestation or substance, AND SO it is for this reason that Paul Younan opted not to translate *Miltha* directly. (Please see the footnote on John 1:1.)

Going from the deeper aspects of *Miltha* that are not shared with *Memra/devar*, the trend of those applications is opposite; reason being, *Memra/devar* was intended to de-anthropomorphisize clear descriptions of deity. *Miltha*, on the other hand, embraced this physicality on both a literal and figurative spiritual level. Whereas the word *Memra* shows the manifestations going from the real world up, *Miltha* shows these manifestations from the mystical world toward the physical. This is the key to understanding statements in Proverbs 3 as well as by Y'shua himself who speaks about who has ascended up into heaven or who has descended down; literally breathing, cohabitating on the Earth. That is why Yochanan is the only writer who talks about Y'shua tabernacling with us.

They Repented Not

Revelation 9:20-21

Multitudes of religious people are under the erroneous impression that they are "saved" in their sins and have been forgiven, simply because they have "repented" according to traditional guidelines. This is because they don't realize there is an extreme difference between religious status quo repentance and reality. The "religious status quo repentance" theology is famous for making people feel guilty about their sin and then providing religious "comfort food" to put them at ease. Many Catholics, for instance, believe that confession to a man in a booth takes care of their need for repentance – but this is simply a tradition. Most Christians categorically believe repentance means "to change your mind," to "accept Jesus," or to "believe upon the shed blood at the cross." Hardly anyone stops to think that religious tradition interprets Scripture according to ***tradition*** and that they might just be "missing the mark" by blindly following their religious leaders. The thing is, there is a vast gulf between religious and true repentance.

There are two Hebrew words that translate into the English word "repent." In Moshe's appeal to YHWH both words appear in the same verse: *"**Turn** (shuv) from thy fierce wrath, and **repent** (nacham) of this evil against thy people*" (Exodus 32:12). The Jewish world predominately focuses on the word ***shuv*** as in ***Teshuva***, whereas the Christian world functionally adopts ***nacham – two*** very different words. "*Shuv*" appears 1,066 times in Scripture but is almost entirely negated by modern Christian theology. The first mention of *shuv* is: *"In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, until you **return** (shuv) unto the ground…"* (B'resheet/Genesis 3:19). Clearly *shuv* means to return to where you've come from and this is the key to true repentance.

Teshuva (repentance) means ***return to*** YHWH. "*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him* ***return*** *(shuv)* ***unto YHWH****, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our Elohim, for he will abundantly pardon"* (Isaiah 55:7).

How can a person *return* to YHWH if they've never known His Ways or experienced the Kingdom of Elohim? It would seem that in order to return to something, you would have to have been there before. In reality, the *neshama* (spirit) of each individual belongs to YHWH and by surrendering and turning to YHWH every soul is, in fact, returning to their spiritual origin. This is also what it means to be *"born from the beginning,"* whereas being "born again" is a bit of a misnomer. In reality when a person makes *teshuva* and returns to YHWH they come to know the Spirit of Mashiyach (the Ruach haKodesh), but they also experience their own *neshama*. Not only has the unrepentant person not come to know the Ways of YHWH, but in reality they have not *come unto their own spirit* until they make *teshuva*.

Teshuva or returning to YHWH is an absolute requirement to obtain pardon; there is no other way to Salvation. Sin first entered into man through Adam and Eve, but whether Jew or Gentile, man's destiny lies outside of sin. Our Creator created us according to His purpose. By returning to Him *our* true purpose is revealed, but we must also return to Him on His *terms* and *conditions*.

Nacham is translated as; comfort (57), repent (41), comforter (9), ease (1), for a total of only 108 occurrences. Christian theology weighs in very heavily on comforting the sinners by teaching them that "Jesus did it all" or "you don't have to keep the law" or "you are saved by grace" or "all your sins past, present and future are forgiven" or "say the sinners prayer and get saved" or "it doesn't make any difference if you keep the law" or "Jesus did away with the law"…on and on; there are literally hundreds of other religious clichés that make sinners feel comfortable in their sin. Religious comforts are also extended by theology like Justification, Grace only, Dispensationalism and Replacement Theologies which gives "the Church" the power to forgive sin and make void the requirement of *teshuva*. Christianity has given itself a theological license to transgress Torah; invented, of course, by the post-apostolic founders of the all-Gentile church.

In reality *Nacham* (repent or comfort) refers to the Spirit of YHWH bringing comfort ***after*** a person does Teshuva and takes back the ground they lost through sin. The comfort aspect occurs when we return to YHWH and He draws us close to Himself. However, most Christians are content with the social gratification of church membership and being comforted by religious traditions. Modern religion *copes* with sin. Social transgressions such as gossip, backbiting, condemnation, finger pointing, evil imaginations, slander, adultery, lawlessness and covetousness are normative in most Churches because, "Hey, nobody can keep the law perfectly, only Jesus, and he died to forgive us our sins." There is a massive gulf between false religion that comforts a person in their sins versus turning to YHWH and His Mashiyach and making things right. Unfortunately, when many Christians hear true repentance being preached they are quick to condemn the preacher as a "legalist;" because the truth about repentance feels to them like harassment or embarrassment.

Most of the religious world sees repentance as something you do after you sin. Many sin and "repent" over and over simply because they have never known the true nature of *Teshuva* (repentance). Teshuva is a daily turning to YHWH; every thought is subjugate to obedience to the Mashiyach (2 Cor. 10:5), implying that our words and actions are done in the Spirit of YHWH. Throughout the Renewed Covenant we see Y'shua our Mashiyach, Peter, James, John and Paul ministering "*perfection*" which is a state of completion in one's spirit. Mashiyach is the *life* of Torah that brings perfection. We humans know that we are not "perfect" beings, yet we are called to be *tamiym* (perfect, complete, clean). Noah and Awraham were *perfect* long before Torah was given at Sinai and before Y'shua came to Earth as Mashiyach.

To make *Teshuva* (repentance) is to empower the spiritual man. *"Draw near to Elohim, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners: sanctify your hearts, you divided in mind."* (James 4:8). *Teshuva* is the basis of how we draw near to YHWH, and it is only realized

through Torah observance. Torah is the Will of YHWH, His Love Letter, His Promise, and His Covenant. Torah contains the *Terms and Conditions* of YHWH's Love towards His Creation.

The Torah of YHWH is *perfect* converting the soul, yet many are quick to reject Torah even when they have little or no understanding of how it reveals the Kingdom of Elohim according to Mashiyach. The rabbinical world may have kept Torah from the Gentiles, but Mashiyach who is the *"Light unto the Gentiles"* (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; 60:3), did the very opposite. The prophets foretold of the Gentiles being drawn unto YHWH in Mashiyach. Rav Shaul taught the Gentile world about the "inner spiritual man" which is the foundation of Torah that guides us according to the Image of Elohim. This is also one of the reasons why the Pharisaic elite wanted to kill him, they were threatened because he was "stealing their thunder" and bringing Torah to the Gentiles. The more the Gentile world has Torah written upon their hearts the more redundant the various religious traditions become; indeed the religious hierarchies would become irrelevant.

A very common tradition within Gentile Churches is that neither Y'shua nor Paul expected Gentiles to live like Jews; and Acts 15 records the dispute among those *"who believed from the teaching of the Pharisees"*. Here again it was clearly a matter of the traditions of the Pharisees being in conflict with the *Way* of Mashiyach, not a matter of "living like Jews." However, Shimon Peter set the record straight: *"And He differentiates nothing between them and us because He cleansed their hearts by faith"* (Acts 15:9). The Renewed Covenant requires that Torah be written upon the heart – this is what it means to have a clean heart, whether a person is Jewish or not in this matter is irrelevant. It was a watershed concept for most Jews and Gentiles that, *"He differentiates nothing between them,"* but in reality authentic Jewish identity has always been defined by Mashiyach; not by various hierarchical religions of Jews.

In other words when you make *teshuva* and truly follow in the footsteps of Mashiyach, others will most certainly scorn you for living like a Jew because Christianity has done an extensive makeover to take the Jew out of their version of Y'shua. The resistance against you for making true repentance will come from church people, family, friends, pastors and those who habitually accuse followers of Mashiyach of being "legalists" and "Judaizers" because they prefer their own traditional worldly lifestyles. But Mashiyach says; *"Whoever finds his soul will lose it, and whoever loses his soul for my sake will find it"* (Matthew 10:39).

Another component of repentance is to *enter* into the Government of Mashiyach, rather than talk about it. Every dominion, government and authority that has not entered into the *perfection* of Mashiyach is not of him. Mashiyach is begotten of YHWH which means he is the *Firstborn* and head of YHWH's Government. "***Misrah***" (government; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 22:21) comes from the root word "***Sarah***". It is through the descendant of Awraham and Sarah that the Promise and heavenly Government was established. This Promise was given in Gan Eden; *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and* ***her seed****; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel"* (Genesis 3:15). YHWH ordained that the *"****Seed of Woman****"*, which is Mashiyach's Government, would bruise the head of the serpent. Therefore the Government of Mashiyach has been a continuum from the Garden of Eden right through to the World to Come, and every generation is called to depart from iniquity, turn away from all false dominions and subscribe to Mashiyach. To do this a person must stop adhering to the teachings of man and ***turn to*** YHWH to observe His Torah – His Divine instructions – and begin to learn about Justice, Peace and Righteousness according to Mashiyach.

One of the very first words on the lips of Mashiyach Y'shua was "repent" (Matt. 4:17). It is imperative that we understand how to repent (make Teshuva) and turn to YHWH and keep His Commandments. Rav Shaul gives testimony to King Agrippa of a "heavenly vision" saying: "…*I preached from the first to them in Damascus, and to them in Urishlim and in all the villages of Judaea; and I preached also to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and should turn to Elohim, and should do the works suitable to repentance"* (Acts 26:20). There is no doubt, whatsoever, that Rav Shaul spoke with the full weight and authority of Mashiyach Y'shua and Torah. Paul

taught *"repent and turn to Elohim"* which is very Hebraic, very commonly understood among Jews, and a very ancient understanding which means to observe Torah! Paul commanded Gentiles (who, like the original Jewish followers of Y'shua, adhere to the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) to: *"Do the works suitable to repentance."* Same Heavenly Father, same rules! Y'shua Mashiyach did not come to replace YHWH or to start a new, Torah-less religion. He came to show us in person how to do it right.

Thirteen Principles of Netzari Faith

By Andrew Gabriel Roth & Baruch Ben Daniel

WE of the Netzari faith hold these faith principles to be true, just and complete understandings of the original message of YHWH and His Son, Maran Y'shua Meshikha (the Mashiyach):

1) On יהוה YHWH

We believe YHWH is a singular and indivisible Uncreated Being called YHWH ("Yahweh") who brought the entire actual and potential universes into being by the force of His *Miltha* (Manifestation/Word) emanating from His Mind and into spoken force and power. We further believe that the other name for this Emanation / Manifestation of the Divine *Miltha* – also known in Hebrew as *davar* and *memra* – is in fact the Son of YHWH Himself, known to the world as Y'shua of Nazareth (Psalm 33:6, John 1:1-5). We affirm YHWH as all seeing, all-knowing and all-powerful; there is no part of potential or actual creation that escapes His attention or is not under His direct control. YHWH reveals Himself in Exodus 3:14-16 as "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh", which affirms His exclusive status as the Eternal One without End, existing simultaneously in all realities that are, ever have been, ever will exist or ever could be.[80]

2) On Mashiyach as a human office

We believe Mashiyach is given power and validity as a human office with divine aspects and ramifications attached. Mashiyach is greater than his ancestor Dawid because, unlike Dawid, Mashiyach is an eternal and global ruler given authority directly from YHWH Himself (Daniel 7:1-14). In talking about the human side of Mashiyach, we affirm that he was literally and completely a human being, not the appearance of flesh only. Mashiyach was fully human in order to suffer, bleed and die for our benefit (Isaiah 53:8-12, Zechariah 12:10), and he did nothing in terms of either miracles or teachings that his Father YHWH had not previously commanded or revealed to the sages of blessed memory that have arisen in Israel (John 6:32; 10:18; 12:49; 14:21, 24, 31; 15:10). Most assuredly, YHWH Himself did not die on an execution stake, for then all the Universe would have ceased. Instead, it was Y'shua's purely human will and nefesh (soul/life force) that died (Matthew 26:34, Mark 14:34), so that it could be resurrected by his Father YHWH three days later (John 2:19-22; Acts 9:21; Romans 4:24, 7:4, 8:11; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 1:1; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 1:21).

3) On the Divine side, or Qnoma, of Mashiyach

We believe the divine side of Y'shua haMashiyach is a matter of Tanakh prophecy[81] and that his divinity is wholly separate from his human life-force and personality[82] and yet this same divine occurrence is identical as a reflection/image of the exact representation of the one divine nature of YHWH; this image is not a separate nature but a branch / occurrence / *qnoma* of the One

80 Because this form of YHWH's Name contains all the possible forms of "to be": "I am that I am", "I have been who I have been" and "I will be what I will be". As a direct result of this etymology, sages have referred to YHWH also as "the Eternal", a title that is carried over into mystical writings and other famous Jewish commentaries and targums, as well as being referenced in the Tanakh and the New Testament, (Genesis 21:33, Deuteronomy 33:27, Jeremiah 10:10, Matthew 27:63, 1 Timothy 1:17, Hebrews 9:14).

81 Isaiah 11:1-2, Zechariah 12:10 to name two, there are many more such passages throughout the diglot.

82 Another key distinction from pagan "god-man" myths, where heroes like Hercules and Mithras were said to in effect have their "divine DNA" mixed with their humanity as a result of a false deity having sexual intercourse with a mortal woman.

(Aramaic John 5:26, Colossians 1:16-20, Hebrews 1:1-5).[83] The Netzari faith rejects the notion of a Trinity or the term of Tri-unity, that proposes three separate divine "persons" (Aramaic *parsopa*, Greek *prosopon*, Latin *personna*), for to posit separated divine natures - even while suggesting they agree one hundred percent of the time - is idolatry and a direct violation of the First and Second Commandments given at Sinai (Exodus 20:1-6, Deuteronomy 5:6-10).[84] Y'shua is one with His Father YHWH because his sharing of the one divine nature of YHWH keeps his divine side in constant communication with his separated humanity, or "will".

4) On "Godhead"

We believe the nature of "Godhead" is revealed in Tanakh, specifically Isaiah 53:1 as the "arm of YHWH." Mashiyach as YHWH's saving and forgiving arm comes in YHWH's own Name (Exodus 6:6, 23:20-22; John 17:11) and is directly representative of his relationship to His Father. An arm has no separated will from the body but moves under direct command, as do the rest of the limbs, of the mind. In the same way, it is an error to posit that the divine side of Y'shua is a separate entity from the Divine Mind of His Father YHWH, although Y'shua clearly also had his own human will, as well (Matthew 26:39).

5) On the binding nature of Hebrew Tanakh

We believe that the Hebrew Tanakh, commonly and erroneously referred to as the "Old Testament" is current, binding, authoritative and infallible. There is no conflict whatsoever between Tanakh and the Renewed Covenant, and we believe further that the Renewed Covenant also sheds much light on how Tanakh is best understood (called "fulfilled" in many areas). Therefore, it is extremely important to recognize that the foundation of the Renewed Covenant is the Tanakh and would be easily thrown into confusion without an excellent applied knowledge of the Tanakh (Matthew 26:54, Mark 14:49, Luke 4:21, 24:32, 44; John 2:22, 7:38, 42; 10:35; 13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37; 20:9).

The Torah therefore has not passed away one *yodh*, as Y'shua himself said (Matthew 5:17-19, Luke 16:16-17) since the heavens and earth are still here. Details on how to observe Torah in light of Y'shua's teachings are, of course, given in many other places throughout this diglot.

Furthermore, while there is much to be gained from the scholarship of all ancient variants of Tanakh (Peshitta Tanakh, LXX, Dead Sea Scrolls, Samaritan Pentateuch, etc.), we maintain that the essential message in terms of doctrine and proper practice has been preserved and can be ascertained to a high degree of certainty. It is therefore the Netzari approach to accept the Masoretic Text as base text, but to also include these other ancient sources that contain harmonious mutual readings.

Specifically, the Hebrew canon consists of 39 books[85] certified before the Common Era by Jewish authorities whom neither Y'shua nor his talmidim (disciples) ever countermanded. This principle

83 A nature, or *kyanna* in Aramaic, is a theoretical construct. A *qnoma*, however, is a concretization or physical example from that nature. Any nature can have multiple occurrences of itself and yet remain a singular nature. So there is also one human nature as well, but 6 billion examples of that nature on the planet. On the divine side a *shekhinah* or physical manifestation of YHWH's will (e.g. the Burning Bush or the glory-smoke that filled the Temple after Solomon's dedication) is a divine *qnoma* from the singular divine *kyanna*, but YHWH remains One. So it is with the qnoma from YHWH that is in His Son.

84 Because by this same argument a pagan could believe in separate deities controlling for example the sea, the earth and the sky while under the command of the Ruler-god. These deities in myth are all created at the same time and out of the same substance; whereas the Son of YHWH, while eternal as a thought in his Father's mind, nevertheless was actualized at a later time to do His Father's work. YHWH, however, in His thought which later became the Miltha-Word of His Son, stands alone as the One Uncreated being, out of Whom everything else descends or unfolds. This puts the true understanding of YHWH as enshrined in Holy Writ in a wholly different category from that of the pagans.

85 Josephus, in his preface to *War Against the Jews*, writes that these 39 books were viewed as 22 by the Jewish authorities of his day. There is no discrepancy. Instead, we know from ancient tradition that 12 minor prophets were considered to be one book and other sources record that what appears as "double books" (Samuel, Kings, Chronicles) were originally one (Ezra and Nehemiah was possibly one book as well). A combination of these factors easily reduces the number of books from 39 to 22.

is evidenced by the sources quoted by Y'shua as well the Pharisees[86]. Their corpus of discussion bears powerful witness to the titles comprising the Tanakh canon in the First Century, especially when combined with other primary evidence such as Josephus and the Dead Sea Scrolls record. Scripture affirms in numerous places, there is but One Instruction for Jew and for foreigner. Israel was intended to be the example for all other nations to follow, not the sole user of the Torah.

6) On the binding nature of the Renewed Covenant

We believe that the Aramaic traditions in general, and the Peshitta in particular, is the most valid, if not critical, source to understanding Y'shua's teachings. Netzarim believers are advocates for proving all Renewed Covenant teachings through the prism of Hebrew Tanakh and applying timeworn Hebraic understandings to all the source texts mentioned.

It is also our belief that the Peshitta text, for at least 22 Renewed Covenant books, is the most accurate record of the original autographs that has survived intact from the Apostolic Age through to modern times. We further believe that the only change between the originals in *ktav ashurri* ("Hebrew") script in Israel and the version that was preserved elsewhere in the Middle East is the preference of "Master Yah" rather than "YHWH" for the proper title of the Father, a trend that is in the minority in the Tanakh, though not unheard of (Exodus 15:1-2, Psalm 68:4). In all other respects, when restoring the archaic readings of the 22, what we have here in this diglot is absolutely the closest possible original NT available in the world; sacred, inviolate and perfect.

7) On the binding nature of "the Western Five"

For the Western Five of the Renewed Covenant (2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude and Revelation), we accept the majority opinion that the most ancient surviving copies of these works at present have been retained in Greek; however, extensive evidence points to earlier Hebrew or Aramaic versions of these works which is currently lost to us, but which may well be restored prior to the end of this age. We fully accept a full 27-book canon, but not because modern authorities certify this. Instead, we accept ancient testimony that early Christendom also took into account that the book list of the original Netzarim in Israel included these texts.[87]

Concurrently, we reject readings added to the Eastern Peshitta and the Western Five that have clear evidence of tampering from later centuries, and we have scrupulously annotated each case of this tampering along with sound scholarly and historical reasons that explain how and why this happened.

It is also important to note that not one single "innovation" of the Roman Catholic church ever made it past the scribes of the Church of the East who were guarding the Eastern Peshitta 22-book canon. This is because many original Netzarim fled to this assembly in the Persian Empire, beyond the reach of both Rome and Byzantium, and although the Church of the East did evolve according to "Constantinian Christianity" in later centuries, its Scripture maintains an unbroken chain. Hundreds of examples of this fact can be found in this diglot and in other Netzari publications.

In conclusion, we affirm the Western Five as free of doctrinal error, inspired by the Ruach haKodesh and being comprised of the sacred and eternal words of YHWH; but we also acknowledge, that there have been challenges in its transmission and custody unlike the other 22 books. Therefore, our belief in the Western Five rests more in a faith-based rather than a historical-textual paradigm,

86 We should also note that Rav Shaul did not confine his quotations to these same kinds of sources. As we have seen in his writings, Rav Shaul has no qualms quoting from pagan sources such as Menander and Epimenides, along with making references even to Greco-Roman mythology. However, a distinction must be made, as this is merely Rav Shaul's attempt to use the cultural background of his audience to win them over to the truth (1 Corinthians 9:20-22). And, of course, this method does not also prevent Rav Shaul from authoritatively quoting from almost every book in the Tanakh for his audience as well. Furthermore, for Rav Shaul to quote from pagan sources in his letters meant that he most definitely did not consider his letters to be on par with "Set Apart Scripture." No man of Hebraic Jewish faith (especially of Paul's caliber) would even think of writing such things into Scripture that would be considered on par with Tanakh.

87 More information on this topic is available in "The Ichabod Scenario" section of Andrew Gabriel Roth's publication Path to Life.

but this fact does not reduce our devotion to it as a valid part of the Renewed Covenant, excepting again those readings that can be shown to be later additions of record.

8) On the Literal, or Pshat, Interpretation of Scripture

We believe that Scripture, as Elohim-breathed text, exists at multiple and simultaneous levels of understanding. However, there is no esoteric or mystical analysis that can be valid if the basic plain meaning of the Tanakh or Renewed Covenant texts are overturned. This rule applies to all great historical interpretive works that claim to be scripturally-based, including but not limited to the Talmud, the Sefer Yetzirah, Zohar, Bahir, Book of Yashar, Book of Enoch, the Kabbalah and also the writings of Greek based "Church Founders."

Netzarim reject all claims that the Ruach haKodesh inspires "spiritual revelations" that contradict or oppose Scripture. Similarly all such "power grabs" that attempt to substitute YHWH's Word with man made traditions, whether Jewish or Christian, are hereby repudiated. We further believe that there is an objective standard for all human conduct, a clear right and wrong, from which man must scrupulously adhere to at all times or face disaster (Deuteronomy 30:15, 19; 32:39; Judges 2:10-23).

We further believe that all Commands of YHWH, regardless from which Covenant writings they are derived, can be understood and practiced with reasonable effort from sincere seekers of truth without being filtered by institutions or structures not endorsed in Set Apart Writ.

We further believe the literal truth of all historical events enshrined in Scripture, from Eden, to the parting of the waters for Moshe, to the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of Y'shua haMashiyach, and the judgment and restoration of the world at the End of Days.

9) On the tribal inheritance (spiritual/physical) of Israel, Judah and the nations

We believe that the promises YHWH made to the Twelve Tribes of Israel include Judah, and furthermore, that Judah is blessed of YHWH (Genesis 49:11, Zechariah 8:23, Luke 15:11-32, John 4:22, Romans 11:1-29). We categorically reject all forms of anti-Semitism, both subtle and overt, which would attempt to separate the identity of Judah from members of modern Jewry today.

Conversely, while we can neither confirm nor deny any individual's belief that they are blood descendants from one of the Ten Northern Tribes taken into Assyrian captivity in 722 BCE, we can and do most certainly affirm that it is incumbent upon every human being, regardless of lineage, to embrace both Torah observance and the identity of Y'shua as YHWH's Mashiyach.

We further believe that the Renewed Covenant was first directed to Judah and Israel, and then to anyone else who joins with them (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ephesians 2:11-13, Hebrews 8:8). The tribe of Judah is the root that supports the nations as well as the other Tribes of Israel (Genesis 49:11), not the other way around. If individual members, Jewish or Gentile, natural or wild branches are broken off, it is for violating Set Apart standards with no ethnic considerations given, since YHWH is no respecter of persons for those who violate His covenant (Leviticus 18:28; 20:22-27, Romans 1:16; 2:9-10, 10:12; 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 6:8, Colossians 3:11).

We believe that tribe of Ephraim (literally and spiritually speaking), though nearly defunct at one time (Isaiah 7:8, Hosea 5:3-14, 9:16), will join with the rest of the nations (Jeremiah 31:9, 18-20; Ezekiel 48:5-6; Hosea 11:8-12) to become part of the One House of Israel according to One Kingdom of Elohim. This process necessarily includes both Gentiles coming into the Judah Gate (Zechariah 8:23) and former Israelites who have lived among the nations and are returning to their tribal inheritance, both physically and spiritually (Ezekiel 36:24-27). Finally, righteous Gentiles who have no Israelite blood whatsoever, will also be counted as priests and Levites (Isaiah 66).

10) On Spiritual Realms and Their Relationship to the Physical Sciences

We believe in the literal existence of both heavenly and demonic spiritual forces, and that these same forces greatly influence good and evil effects in the physical world. Such an admission does not deny physical realities, but considers possible causes of aforesaid effects beyond bodily processes alone, for man does not live by the body and its physical needs alone (Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4). While there is also symbolism and metaphor present in the Good News accounts of Y'shua exorcising demons from people, attempts to suggest that a metaphoric exclusivity applies to Aramaic terms such as *shaida* and *dewa* to the insane, and divorced from negative spiritual forces completely, are erroneous and fully renounced.

We further believe that the first command from YHWH to humanity includes the disciplined observation of the Earth, which is necessary to righteously "subdue" (steward) it (Genesis 1:28). Rav Shaul's command in 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 to *"explore everything…hold fast to the good and fly from everything evil"* reflects this same method, even as we are taught in Psalm 19:1 that *"the **heavens declare** the glory of Elohim; the skies proclaim the work of His hands."* Therefore as the modern sciences explore YHWH's handiwork, evidence of YHWH as the Great Designer is being progressively revealed.[88]

The first mention in any ancient literature[89] of a round Earth – a sphere or *khoog* in the original Hebrew – is contained in Isaiah 40:22.[90] The heavens themselves, or the face of the deep, is also described in Proverbs 8:27 as having a circular character most like an orbit. It is notable that the order of Genesis of simpler life in the seas coming before land animals and culminating with man's creation is mirrored in what modern day biologists have pieced together from the fossil record. Further, in order for life to be *tov meod* (very good) it must also have within itself the ability to adapt to its environment that was also created by YHWH; or, if YHWH permits, to go extinct from the planet.[91]

In the end, it is the duty of every person of faith to explore these issues fully and be subject to the rigors of his own conscience. But, neither is there any reason to suppose that true science and true faith are in conflict.

11) On the timing of Shabbat and the Great Feasts

We of the Netzari faith observe the Seventh Day weekly Shabbat and YHWH's annual feast celebrations, some Netzari communities hold that "the morrow after the Sabbath" (Lev 23:11) for putting the sickle to the grain is 16 Nisan – a premise that is also held by the Pharisees. Other Netzari hold that this Shabbat refers to the weekly Shabbat during Chag haMatzah (Feast of Unleavened Bread); therefore, First Fruits always falls on the first day of the week (Sunday). The Tzadakim (Sadducees) of Y'shua's time and Karaites today[92] follow the latter reckoning.

88 It is another matter entirely whether the individual scientists who make certain scientific discoveries recognize the relationships that exist between the metaphysical (spiritual) and natural worlds.

89 Prior to this time all ancient scientific authorities said the Earth was flat. The famous experiment of the Greek scientist Erastosthenes that proved both the shape and gave a close estimate of the planet's actual size would not be done before about 240 BCE, by which time the prophet Isaiah's description of the Earth as a circle-sphere was almost 500 years old. Furthermore, the common phrase "end of the Earth" throughout Tanakh (Deuteronomy 28:64-65; Psalm 19:4-6, 22:27, 59:13) in no way refers to anything other than boundaries of land to sea, land and sea to sky, or sky to the Universe. The same can be said for the *kanaph* or "corners" of the Earth mentioned in Isaiah 11:12.

90 And so, ironically, the famous scientist Galileo could have made a scriptural argument against the Roman Church and chided them for using pagan sources over the Scriptures for their beliefs! Furthermore, the mis-reading of lines that talk about "shaking the Earth by its edges" (Job 38:13) could also refer to the arc of a spherical object, like a marble for example. Or, since the word in Hebrew for "earth" can also mean "land"; this possibility means that the wicked are not expelled from a totally flat Earth, either. Such harmonization is necessary given the total picture Scripture provides.

91 And certainly there are species such as the Leviathan which were apparently around in ancient times but which no longer exist today.

92 This is admittedly somewhat of an oversimplification, as some Karaite opinions seem to have wider support than others. Most Netzarim, for example, agree with the Karaites that there are some later additions/excesses to the current Rabbinic calendar and that observation of the Moon is at least important enough as a duty along with consulting fixed cycles. However, that is not the same thing as saying that the Karaite solutions to the issues they raise about the Rabbinics are the only ones

All Netzari believe the Great Feasts of YHWH contain extensive spiritual and prophetic elements that can and will be accessed only by observance of these *Kadosh Moedim* (Set Apart Appointments).

12) On the nature of Tikkun (Repairing/Restoring) YHWH's Original Knowledge to humankind in the latter days

Isaiah 29:9-16 and Daniel 12:1-4 demonstrate that there is a new hidden knowledge that is coming to humanity towards the End of Days. This is not, though, so much an addition to canonical texts as it is a better understanding of what has been revealed before (Luke 24:44, 1 Corinthians 13:12). Certainly, to a large degree, the "sealed book" mentioned by Isaiah can well be said to be that of the Aramaic Peshitta, which was in a dialect that the prophet could not read. On the other hand, the "sealed book" is also a teaching referenced partially, but not necessarily fully expounded in Set Apart Writ (Matthew 13:11, Luke 8:10, Colossians 2:1-3).

We of the Netzari faith are of one mind that the way to access the hidden knowledge is through living a moral faith-based existence coupled with serious study and reverence for the sacred texts. It is from this solid foundation that deeper insights and clarifications of the plain Word emerge, but these always enrich and never contradict that same Word.

We of the Netzari faith remain steadfast to the decree that we are not to add or take away from the Set Apart Text, as YHWH has clearly warned us (Revelation 22:18-19). So, yes, there are many additional layers to the existing text as well as untold new discoveries to be made that will always make for fruitful exploration, but there is nothing either before or after the collection that we have which can supplant or in any way substitute for the authority of the written Word of YHWH.

13) On the nature of Tikkun the human condition, judgment and the fate of the Cosmos

Daniel 12:1-4 along with a key statement by Y'shua in Luke 14:14, makes it clear that there is a separate resurrection of first the righteous and then the wicked.[93] The plain meaning of these passages then tells us with great force that the judgment of the human nefesh,[94] or soul, is not something that happens immediately after a person's death, but is deferred until the Last Day. Obviously if even an extremely righteous man like Samuel was not taken up to his eternal reward immediately upon his death but "slumbered" in the earth, the same must be said of the rest of us. See 1 Samuel 28:7-15. More details of this principle are also provided in Isaiah 26:12-19.

Finally, as the Living Miltha/Word himself, Y'shua haMashiyach maintains this teaching with full force into our own day. See John 6:39-54; 11:23-27; 12:46-50.

Torah

Torah, commonly known as the Five Books of Moses from Genesis to Deuteronomy, is the Word of YHWH as Covenant, His "instruction in righteousness." Torah contains the *Terms and Conditions* of YHWH's Covenant between Himself and mankind. Those who observe Torah make both private and public declaration that YHWH is Just and altogether Righteous, that there is only One Elohim whose Name is YHWH, and that He Reigns in their hearts according to the Perfection and Beauty of His Spirit. Torah is meant for everyone regardless of ethnicity, religion, location or language; but YHWH also calls individuals to serve as Cohanim (priests), Leviim

Netzarim embrace.

93 See Acts 24:15, where Rav Shaul counts this as a key tenet of his Netzari faith, and also Revelation 20:5-6.

94 The Torah does not enjoin though the Greco-Roman idea of "the soul" per se, as something separately inside a human being. Rather the Hebrew word *nefesh* really means "life force", so man does not so much *have* a soul, but instead he *is a soul*. So when Y'shua talks about both body and nefesh being destroyed, he means our life-force, consciousness, personality, emotions and memories as well!

(those who assist the Cohanim) and Judges to fulfill specific roles for the benefit of the greater population.

Torah is Spiritual, brought from Heaven by the Word of YHWH. While there are blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience, Torah elicits either a pro or con response to YHWH's Word; there is no middle ground. The Word of YHWH is the preincarnate Mashiyach; therefore, Mashiyach is the *Living* Torah.

Torah is YHWH's Love Letter to all of His Creation, designed to increase our capacity for Faith. YHWH is a Loving, Compassionate, Merciful and Forgiving Father who seeks to shower His children with blessings, *if* we will turn to Him and obey His Commandments.

The root word for Torah is "owr" ("aur" in Aramaic) which means "light." *"For the commandment is a lamp; and the Torah is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life"* (Proverbs 6:23).

> *"To the Torah and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them"* (Isaiah 8:20).
>
> *"Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a Torah shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people"* (Isaiah 54:4).
>
> *"Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"* (Psalm 119:105).

Torah is a Faith-conditional Covenant which through observance in Mashiyach brings manifold blessings. Torah observance:

- Reveals the "mystery of the Kingdom of Elohim."
- Provides a spiritual connection with Mashiyach.
- Provides Prophetic discernment of present and future events in the Spirit of Mashiyach.
- Is pleasing unto YHWH and His Mashiyach and brings all manner of true blessings in this life and in the world to come, and much more!

Torah, like every other covenant or contract ever written, demands the element of faith to bring mutual benefits between covenantor and covenantee; however, this particular contract – the Covenant with YHWH – extends beyond our death.

> *"But Elohim will redeem my soul from the power of the grave"* (Psalm 49:15).

Spiritual battles intensify from the moment one begins to observe Torah. As a person walks in Torah, the *Ruach haKodesh* (Set Apart Spirit) convicts them of sin, making them more sensitive to good and evil. As the person's awareness of good and evil increases they are given more Grace to turn away from sinful thoughts and habits which have become intolerable and unwelcome to their souls.

Torah observance is the action of Faith which can also be thought of as "applied righteousness." This is the work of the Ruach haKodesh that awakens the spiritual man to speak and live according to the Word of YHWH as his ultimate authority. According to Y'shua Mashiyach, *"If you love me, keep my commandments"* (John 14:15). *"He who has my commandments with him and keeps them, he is who loves me and he who loves me will be loved by my Father. And I will love him and reveal myself to him"* (John 14:21). *"If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept the commandments of my Father, and I abide in His love"* (John 15:10).

The "***Commandments of my Father***" always refers to Torah. Aramaic "*khawdata"* or Hebrew "*chadasha"* literally means "*renewal*" or "*to make new*"; therefore the ***New*** Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34) is a "***renewal***", or a "***making new***" of the Covenant YHWH had formerly established between Himself and his people. Y'shua and his Talmidim (disciples) kept his ***Father's commandments***, and did not subscribe to any anti-Torah religious ideas which are the product of anti-Messiah. The rebellion against the Word of YHWH (Mashiyach) on Earth began

when haSatan (the Adversary) in Gan Eden deceived Eve into thinking that disobedience was harmless.

The finest definition of Torah in the Ketuvim Netzarim is to look to Mashiyach himself. The second best is: *"All Scripture that was written by the Spirit is profitable for instruction and for decisive refutation, and for correction, and for* ***deep extensive learning in righteousness"*** (2 Timothy 3:16). Mashiyach Y'shua and all the Shlichim were upright and Torah observant. Although often accused of breaking Torah, they never did, and there is absolutely NO scripture that would support that allegation.

The mind that wrote Torah created the Universe; therefore, Torah is universal in every respect. Torah disciplines and protects us from becoming prey to the wiles of the enemy. Through these divine guidelines we are thoroughly protected and provided specific instruction on what to eat, drink, wear, speak and think; we are even shown how to act as ambassadors of Mashiyach. With Torah written upon our hearts, we are never at a loss to enter into and understand that which YHWH desires for us.

The Importance of Torah

YHWH revealed himself according to both male and female attributes and employed the use of both masculine and feminine attributes and titles. His Divine Instruction, among other things, delineates the difference between male and female – including guidelines concerning our dress (clothing) which serves to highlight those differences. This came into play after humankind fell into sin in the Garden of Eden and it became necessary to cover our nakedness – which YHWH Himself accomplished by putting a temporary "covering" on man and woman.

Male and female were created in the image of Elohim; the marriage covenant is a picture of the Covenant between us (the Bride of Mashiyach) and the groom (Mashiyach). The distinctions of male and female are Set Apart unto YHWH according to His Torah and, therefore, clothing plays a significant part in how each of us present ourselves according to gender and modesty. Clothing on the outside speaks of that which is on the inside; but regardless of our levels of Torah Consciousness, each one of us is making a declaration about whether we belong to YHWH and His Mashiyach, or whether we are at war with Him.

Torah as a spiritual "fashion statement" is the thread and fabric of the white garments of righteousness that makes one acceptable for the Wedding Feast. The Spirit of YHWH works in conjunction with Torah to provoke each soul to walk in righteousness and to communicate with Heaven and respond to the offer of the Kingdom of Elohim. The Targumist (Onqelos) wrote that Genesis 2:7 (the living soul of man) is better understood as the *"spirit of speech."* In other words, YHWH breathed a part of Himself into each individual.

Our speech, both in the spirit and what comes out of our mouths, shows whether we are separated unto YHWH as a *Kedoshim* (Set Apart People), or separated from Him. Torah strongly prohibits tale bearing, gossip and slander; we are required to speak Truth one to another in love. Y'shua taught: *"I say to you for every vain word that the sons of men speak, they will give an account of it in the day of judgment"* (Matthew 12:36).

Every thought has been accessible to YHWH, exposing all our intentions and desires: *"Elohim saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"* (Genesis 6:5). Torah guides mankind to know what constitutes Set Apart thoughts unto YHWH: *"And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware"* (D'varim/Deut. 31:21).

Y'shua taught: *"For every tree is known by its fruit. For they do not gather thorns from figs nor do they gather grapes from a thorn bush. From a good man the treasures that are in his good*

heart brings forth good things, and an evil man the evil treasures that are in his heart brings forth evil things. For the abundance of the heart speak the lips" (Luke 6:44, 45). He also elevated the importance of thought consciousness: *"But I say to you that all who that looks at a woman as lustfully at once has committed adultery in his heart"* (Matthew 5:28).

Keeping Torah is NOT a suggestion!

Y'shua amplified Torah to the hearts of his followers: *"YHWH is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; he will magnify the Torah, and make it honorable."* (Isaiah 42:21). All who teach that Torah is impossible to observe, are choosing to believe in the lie from haSatan. Those who break Torah demonstrate that they have no Grace (power to stop from sinning). Rav Shaul explains: *"For many are stiff necked and their discourses vain; and they mislead the minds of people, especially such as are of the circumcision. The mouth of these should be stopped: they corrupt many families; and they teach what they should not, for the sake of filthy lucre."* (Titus 1:10, 11). The "circumcision" here specifically refers to religious elite who dictate religious lifestyles for others; these are the Rabbis, Priests, Pastors, Evangelists, Spiritual Leaders or whoever makes and practices a tradition that makes void Torah or the teachings of Mashiyach.

Rav Shaul taught that Torah is spiritual, not carnal: *"Y'shua the Mashiyach is the same yesterday, today, and forever."* (Hebrews 13:8). The Spirit of Mashiyach is the Word of YHWH Who existed at the beginning of Creation and will continue forever. The Word of YHWH spoke with Adam in Gan Eden and with Noach and Avraham, and it was Mashiyach who gave Torah to Moshe. Mashiyach is the Messenger of YHWH who visited the Prophets and all our Spiritual Forefathers; this is why Torah can only be correctly understood in Mashiyach. To make void Torah is to bring mankind down to the reprobation of the Adversary.

*"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear Elohim, and keep his commandments: for this is the **whole of man**. For Elohim shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil"* (Eccl. 12:13). Notice the "whole of man" which indicates that the righteous element of the human spirit is the only component of man that will endure into eternity; everything else will vaporize. Unfortunately, translators inserted words like "duty of" man, "applies to every person" or "applies to everyone," or "is the right of every man," etc.; when, in fact, the Fear of Elohim is the Spirit of Mashiyach.

As we keep the Commandments of YHWH we are transformed into the Image of Elohim, even His Likeness which is Mashiyach. It is this component of the spiritual man that will resurrect unto eternal life and be forever with Mashiyach. The man who violates Torah lacks the eternal component; therefore he will perish: *"And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which you shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this Torah. For it is not a vain thing for you; **because it is your life:** and through this you shall prolong your days in the land, whither you go over Jordan to possess it."* (Deut. 32:46, 47)

As the Ruach haKodesh writes Torah upon the heart we are being Set Apart unto YHWH to enter into His Perfection. The Word of YHWH requires that we be *perfect* as our Father in Heaven is *perfect* (Genesis 6:9; 17:1; Deut. 18:13; 2 Sam. 22:33; 1 Kings 8:61; 1 Chron. 29:18, 19; Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; Psalm 101:2-6; 1 Peter 5:10; Matthew 5:48; Revelation 3:2). This perfection comes about from abiding with Him and having His Torah written upon our hearts.

Torah in the Renewed Covenant

First Commandment

"Then Elohim instructed the people as follows: "I am YHWH your Elohim,
who rescued you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship any other gods besides me."
Exodus 20:1-3

Gospels and Emissaries[95]	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
Y'shua replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel! YHWH your Elohim is the one and only YHWH. And you must love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these." The teacher of religious law replied, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth by saying that there is only one Elohim and no other. And I know it is important to love him with all my heart and all my understanding and all my strength, and to love my neighbors as myself. This is more important than to offer all of the burnt offerings and sacrifices required in the law." Realizing this man's understanding, Y'shua said to him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of Elohim." And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions. **(Mark 12:28-34)**	Yet for us there is but one Elohim, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live. **(1 Corinthians 8:6)** These events happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did or worship idols as some of them did. For the Scriptures say, "The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged themselves in pagan revelry." **(1 Corinthians 10:6-7)** You believe that there is one Elohim. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder. **(Ya'akov 2:18)**	There is only one YHWH[96], one faith, one baptism, and there is only one Elohim and Father, who is over us all and in us all and living through us all. **(Ephesians 4:5-6)**	"Give praise to our Elohim, all you his bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great." And I heard, as it were, the voice of the great multitude and as the sound of many waters and the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying: "HalleluYah! For YHWH our Elohim, the Almighty, reigns…his bride has made herself ready. And it was given to her to clothe herself in the fine linen… for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, "Write, blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of Elohim…" **(Revelation 19:5-10)** And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, "Don't do that; I am a fellow servant of yours, and of the brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship Elohim." **(Revelation 22:8-9)**

95 This chart follows the classification system of the NT described elsewhere in this diglot. The 27 books of the NT are re-organized firstly into 22 books and subsequently into four "scrolls" that contain groupings of these books. The Four Scrolls are: 1) Gospels and Emissaries, containing Matthew through Acts; 2) The Major Testimonies, containing Hebrews, the Testimony of the Two Brothers of our Master [Ya'akov and Yehuda], The Testimony of Keefa [1 and 2 Peter], Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians; 3) The Ten, containing the remaining Pauline Epistles [Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon] and 4) The Second Testimony of Yochanan [1-3 John and Revelation]. Tanakh quotes are derived from the New Living Translation of the Scriptures, with the exception that YHWH (and Elohim) have been restored to the text to reflect the original Hebrew. This version was preferred for readability but also checked against the Hebrew.

96 Often this particular passage in Ephesians is thought to refer to "one Master" as in Y'shua. Once again though, the Aramaic makes it clear with the use of the word *MarYah* that it is YHWH being referenced.

Second Commandment

"Do not make idols of any kind,
whether in the shape of birds or animals or fish. You must never worship or bow down to them, for I, YHWH your Elohim, am a jealous Elohim who will not share your affection with any other gods! I do not leave unpunished the sins of those who hate me, but I punish the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations. But I lavish my love on those who love me and obey my commands, even for a thousand generations."
Exodus 20:4-6

Y'shua said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: Worship YHWH your Elohim, and serve Him only." **(Matthew 4:10)** Again you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'do not break your oaths, but keep the oaths you have made to YHWH.' But I tell you, do not swear at all; either by heaven, for it is Elohim's throne, or by the earth, for it is His footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your yes be yes and your no be no. Anything beyond this comes from the evil one. **(Matthew 5:33-38)** Therefore, since we are Elohim's offspring, we should not think that the Divine Being is like silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill. **(Acts 17:29)**	They exchanged the glory of the immortal Elohim for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore Elohim gave them over to their sinful desires of their sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of Elohim for a lie, and served created things rather than the Creator, who is forever praised. Amen. **(Romans 1:23-25)** So, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols…What am I trying to say? Am I saying that the idols to whom the pagans bring sacrifices are real gods and that these sacrifices are of some value? No, not at all. What I am saying is that these sacrifices are offered to demons, not to Elohim. And I don't want any of you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink from the cup of our Master (Y'shua) and from the cup of demons, too. You cannot eat at our Master's (Y'shua's) Table and at the table of demons, too. What? Do you dare to rouse our Master's (Y'shua's) jealousy as Israel did? Do you think we are stronger than he is? **(1 Corinthians 10:14, 19-22)**	Don't be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against Elohim and the man of lawlessness is revealed – the one who brings destruction. He will exalt himself and defy every god that there is and tear down every object of adoration and worship. He will position himself in the temple of Elohim, claiming that he himself is Elohim. **(2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)** Formerly when you did not know Elohim, you were slaves to those who by their nature are not gods. **(Galatians 4:8)** The fruits of the sinful nature are obvious… idolatry…I warn you as I did before that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of Elohim. **(Galatians 5:19-21)**	Dear children, keep yourselves free from idols. **(1 Yochanan 5:21)** The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood--idols that cannot see or hear or walk. **(Revelation 9:20)** But the… idolaters their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. **(Revelation 21:8)**

Third Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of YHWH your Elohim,
for YHWH will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name.
Exodus 20:7

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
"This then is how you shall pray: Our Father, who is in heaven, Set Apart is Your name." **(Matthew 6:9)** "Now my heart is troubled and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour? No. It was for this very reason that I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." **(Yochanan 12:27-28)** Set Apart Father, protect them by the power of Your name--the name You gave me[97]--so that they may be one even as we are one. **(Yochanan 17:11)**	So he (Y'shua, with YHWH as part of his name) became as much superior to the angels, as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs (that only have "El" in them). **(Hebrews 1:4)**	Wherefore, also, Elohim has highly exalted him and given him a name which is more excellent than all names; that at the name of Y'shua every knee should bow, of (beings) in heaven and on earth and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Master YHWH is Y'shua Mashiyach to the glory of Elohim his Father. **(Philippians 2:9-11)**	I write to you dear children, because you have been forgiven on account of His name. **(1 Yochanan 2:12)**

97 This is the key verse for understanding why praying in Y'shua's name is not idolatry. When a person says Y'shua, he or she is only referencing an affirmation of faith contained in his name that goes to the glory of YHWH. Y'shua means "YHWH is salvation", and since YHWH is in the name given to the Mashiyach, all who call on Mashiyach's name are actually calling on YHWH, and sharing in eternal life through YHWH.

Fourth Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
Six days shall you labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to YHWH your Elohim. On it you shall not do any work, neither you nor your manservant, nor your maidservant nor your animals nor the alien within your gates. For in six days YHWH made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but He rested on the seventh day. Therefore YHWH blessed the seventh day and made it holy.
Exodus 20:8-11

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten
Pray that your flight will not take place during the winter or on the Sabbath.[98] **(Matthew 24:20)** He (Y'shua) went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day went into the synagogue, as was his custom.[99] **(Luke 4:14)** But Barnabas and Paul traveled inland to Antioch of Pisidia. On the Sabbath they went to the synagogue for the services. **(Acts 13:14)** On the Sabbath we went a little way outside the city to a riverbank, where we supposed that some people met for prayer, and we sat down to speak with some women who had come together. **(Acts 16:13)** Each Sabbath found Paul at the synagogue, trying to convince the Jews and Greeks alike. **(Acts 18:4)**	For there remains a Sabbath day of rest for the people of Elohim. **(Hebrews 4:9)**	Therefore do not let anyone else judge you by what you eat or what you drink, or with respect to a sacred festival, a New Moon festival or the Sabbath day.[100] **(Colossians 2:16)**

98 Y'shua teaches that Shabbat is suspended for the sake of saving life. By doing so he assures any disciples who may otherwise have followed a religious tradition. He warns them to get motivated when they see the signs, but this is certainly no indictment against Shabbat observance. Another key element of this passage: Y'shua is clearly saying that Shabbat is valid until the end of time, as these prophecies clearly relate to the End of Days! The prophecies regarding the Acharit HaYamim (latter days) are throughout the Tanakh; the prophetic links are clear and directly pointed to the days leading up to his return as Mashiyach Ben David.

99 Notice that Y'shua and his disciples observed Shabbat to a different standard than his opponents. Y'shua exposed the hypocrisy of man-made traditions. Tradition says circumcision is okay on Shabbat, which requires physical work, yet Y'shua was condemned for performing healings on Shabbat. The Dead Sea Scrolls record how the Essenes, contrary to the halakha of both Y'shua and the Pharisees, would not lift an animal from a pit on Shabbat (see also Matthew 12:1). Isaiah 56, 58 and 66 provide plenty of prophetic authority that Shabbat is to be kept by YHWH's people, both Jew and Gentile, right through into the new Heavens and new Earth.

100 Here is a perfect example of one of the most abused verses within NT Scripture which shows how the false Church system has twisted the Word into the opposite of what was originally intended. The Colossians were originally pagans who became believers in Y'shua Mashiyach. As a result, these new believers faced severe ridicule from their still-pagan families, friends, neighbors, etc. Rav Shaul is clearly exhorting these new believers to not let others from outside the Faith lay judgment (condemnation) upon them. Rav Shaul refers to Shabbat and New Moon festivals which are 100 percent unique to Israel and are clearly prophesied for both Jew and Gentile through to the new Heavens and new Earth (Isaiah 66:23).

Fifth Commandment

Honor your father and your mother,
so that you may live long in the land YHWH your Elohim is giving you.
Exodus 20:12

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of Elohim for the sake of your tradition? "For Elohim said, `Honor your Father and Mother,' and, `He who speaks evil of Father or Mother is to be put to death.' "But you say, `Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever I have that would help you has been given to Elohim," he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And by this you invalidated the word of Elohim for the sake of your tradition. **(Matthew 15:3-6)** And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." Then he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Y'shua said, "…Honor your Father and Mother." **(Matthew 19:17, 19)**	They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, Elohim-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know Elohim's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. **(Romans 1:29-32)**	Children, obey your parents in our Master (Y'shua)[101] for this is right. Honor your Father and Mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with and that you may live long on the earth. **(Ephesians 6:1-3)** Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to our Master (Y'shua). **(Colossians 3:20)**	Everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.[102] **(1 John 5:1)**

101 The phrase in the Aramaic is "Maran," meaning "Our Master," i.e., Y'shua.
102 The context is both "Father" and "children" (YHWH and fellow believers) as well as one's family members.

Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit murder.
Exodus 20:13

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
You have heard that the ancients were told, `You shall not commit murder' and `Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' **(Matthew 5:21)** "For out of the heart come evil thoughts… murders. **(Matthew 15:19)** And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." Then he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Y'shua said, "You shall not commit murder." **(Matthew 19:17-18)**	Being filled with all unrighteousness… murder. **(Romans 1:29)** You shall not murder. **(Romans 13:9)** For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the Torah. **(Ya'akov 2:11)** You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. **(Ya'akov 4:2)**	We know that the Torah is good if one uses it properly. We also know that Torah is made not for the righteous but for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers. **(1 Timothy 1:8-9)**	Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. **(1 John 3:15)** But the…murderers, their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. **(Revelation 21:8)**

Seventh Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.
Exodus 20:14

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
"You have heard that it was said, `You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart… "It was said, `whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce'; but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of un-chastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. **(Matthew 5:27-28, 31-32)** And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery." **(Matthew 19:9)** Then he said to him, "Which ones?" And Y'shua said, "You shall not…commit adultery." **(Matthew 19:18)**	You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? **(Romans 2:22)** You shall not commit adultery. **(Romans 13:9)** For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the Torah. **(Ya'akov 2:11)** Having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children. **(2 Peter 2:14)**	We know that the Torah is good if one uses it properly. We also know that Torah is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers… for adulterers. **(1 Timothy 1:8-10)**	Behold, I will throw her into a coffin,[103] and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. **(Revelation 2:22)** But the… sexually immoral—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death." **(Revelation 21:8)**

103 The Aramaic word *arsa* can mean "bed" but is better translated as "coffin" - a very strong indication that Revelation was not originally penned in Greek, since Greek has distinct words for bed and coffin. The Greek reading of punishing a prostitute by throwing her on a bed is wrong. The Greek reading is in fact so egregious that the translators of KJV and other versions add in italics the words *of sickness* as a way to make the "bed" reading more plausible. However, *of sickness* is not in the Greek text. The word *arsa* appears both in the Aramaic translation from the Greek known as Peshitto, as well as the Crawford manuscript of Revelation.

Eighth Commandment

You shall not steal.
Exodus 20:15

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." Then he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Y'shua said, "You shall not steal." **(Matthew 19:17-18)** "For out of the heart come evil thoughts… thefts. **(Matthew 15:19)**	You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? **(Romans 2:21)** You shall not steal. **(Romans 13:9)** (Neither) thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of Elohim. **(1 Corinthians 6:10)**	He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. **(Ephesians 4:8)** And not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about Elohim our Savior attractive. **(Titus 2:10)**	The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands...or their thefts. **(Revelation 9:20-21)**

Ninth Commandment

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
Exodus 20:16

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." Then he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Y'shua said, "You shall not bear false witness." **(Matthew 19:17-18)** "For out of the heart come evil thoughts… false witness, slanders." **(Matthew 15:19)**	As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks Elohim. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." **(Romans 3:10-13)**	Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices. **(Colossians 3:9)**	But all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death." **(Revelation 21:8)**

Tenth Commandment

You shall not covet
your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant
or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.
Exodus 20:17

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten	Second Testimony of Yochanan
Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. **(Luke 12:15)**	What shall we say then? Is the Torah sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Torah; for I would not have known about coveting if the Torah had not said, "You shall not covet." **(Romans 7:7)** You shall not covet. **(Romans 13:9)**	Put to death…greed, which is idolatry. **(Colossians 3:5)** The fruits of the sinful flesh are obvious… jealousy and envy…I warn you as I did before that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of Elohim. **(Galatians 5:19-21)** You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. **(Ya'akov 4:2)**	For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world. **(1 John 2:16)**

Passover

"You must remember this day forever. Each year you will celebrate it as a special festival to YHWH. For seven days, you may eat only bread made without yeast. On the very first day you must remove every trace of yeast from your homes. Anyone who eats bread made with yeast at any time during the seven days of the festival will be cut off from the community of Israel. On the first day of the festival, and again on the seventh day, all the people must gather for a time of special worship. No work of any kind maybe (may be) done on these days except in the preparation of food. "Celebrate this Festival of Unleavened Bread, for it will remind you that I brought your forces out of the land of Egypt on this very day. This festival will be a permanent regulation for you, to be kept from generation to generation..."Remember, these instructions are permanent and must be observed by you and your descendants forever. When you arrive in the land YHWH has promised to give you, you will continue to celebrate this festival. Then your children will ask, 'What does all this mean? What is this ceremony about?' And you will reply, 'It is the celebration of YHWH's Passover, for he passed over the homes of the Israelites in Egypt. And though he killed the Egyptians, he spared our families and did not destroy us.'" Then all the people bowed their heads and worshiped. So the people of Israel did just as YHWH had commanded through Moshe and Aaron.

Exodus 12:1-28

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies
On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread (the day the Passover lambs were sacrificed), Y'shua's disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go to prepare the Passover supper?" So Y'shua sent two of them into Jerusalem to make the arrangements. "As you go into the city," he told them, "a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him. At the house he enters, say to the owner, 'The Teacher asks, Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?' He will take you upstairs to a large room that is already set up. That is the place; go ahead and prepare our supper there." So the two disciples went on ahead into the city and found everything just as Y'shua had said, and they prepared the Passover supper there. **(Mark 14:12-16)** Every year Y'shua's parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. **(Luke 2:41)** It was time for the annual Passover celebration, and Y'shua went to Jerusalem. **(Yochanan 2:13)** As soon as the Passover season ended, we boarded a ship at Philippi in Macedonia and five days later arrived in Troas, where we stayed a week. **(Acts 20:6)**	It was by faith that Moshe commanded the people of Israel to keep the Passover and to sprinkle blood on the doorposts so that the angel of death would not kill their firstborn sons. **(Hebrews 11:28)** Get rid of the old leaven that you may be a new batch without yeast--as you really are. For Mashiyach, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.[104] Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth. **(1 Corinthians 5:7-8)**

104 Rav Shaul uses this Passover imagery to his mostly Gentile audience because he expects them to know about and keep the Feast, as the last line most definitely indicates!

Firstfruits

"Celebrate the Feast of Harvest with the Firstfruits of the crops you sow in your field. "Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field. "Three times a year all the men are to appear before the Sovereign YHWH. "Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me along with anything containing yeast. "The fat of my festival offerings must not be kept until morning. "Bring the best of the Firstfruits of your soil to the house of YHWH your Elohim."

Exodus 23:16-19

Gospels and Emissaries	Second Testimony of Yochanan
If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is Set Apart, then the whole batch is Set Apart; if the root is Set Apart, so are the branches.[105] **(Romans 11:16)** But Mashiyach has indeed been raised from the dead, the Firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. **(1 Corinthians 15:20)** He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of Firstfruits of all he created **(Ya'akov 1:18)**	These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as Firstfruits to Elohim and the Lamb. [106] **(Revelation 14:4)**

105 Like Passover, Rav Shaul expects the Roman believers to understand this imagery that can only come through the observance of this Torah based Feast!

106 The context is perfect here. The first martyrs validated their faith in Y'shua and Torah and their sacrifice became symbolic of the eternal life that awaits all others who follow them, even as Y'shua is the Firstfruit among the resurrected dead and actually rose early on the very day of Firstfruits. Also see Ya'akov 1:11.

Feast of Weeks/Shavuot

"From the day after the Sabbath, the day the bundle of grain was lifted up as an offering, count off seven weeks. Keep counting until the day after the seventh Sabbath, fifty days later, and bring an offering of new grain to YHWH. From wherever you live, bring two loaves of bread to be lifted up before YHWH as an offering. These loaves must be baked from three quarts of choice flour that contains yeast. They will be an offering to YHWH from the first of your crops. Along with this bread, present seven one-year-old lambs with no physical defects, one bull, and two rams as burnt offerings to YHWH. These whole burnt offerings, together with the accompanying grain offerings and drink offerings, will be given to YHWH by fire and will be pleasing to him. Then you must offer one male goat as a sin offering and two one-year-old male lambs as a peace offering. "The priest will lift up these offerings before YHWH, together with the loaves representing the first of your later crops. These offerings are holy to YHWH and will belong to the priests. That same day, you must stop all your regular work and gather for a sacred assembly. This is a permanent law for you, and it must be observed wherever you live."

Leviticus 23:15-21

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies
Some time later Y'shua went up for a Feast of the Jews.[107] **(Yochanan 5:1)** On the day of The Feast of Weeks, seven weeks after Y'shua's resurrection, the believers were meeting together in one place. **(Acts 2:1)** Paul had decided against stopping at Ephesus this time because he didn't want to spend further time in the province of Asia. He was hurrying to get to Jerusalem, if possible, for the Festival of Weeks. **(Acts 20:16)**	In the meantime, I will be staying here at Ephesus until the Festival of Weeks. **(1 Corinthians 16:8)**

107 The research that identifies this feast as Shavuot is fully detailed in "Signs of the Cross," p.405-409.

Yom Kippur

"Remember that the Day of Atonement is to be celebrated on the ninth day after the Festival of Trumpets. On that day you must humble yourselves, gather for a sacred assembly, and present offerings to YHWH by fire. Do no work during that entire day because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement will be made for you before YHWH your Elohim, and payment will be made for your sins. Anyone who does not spend that day in humility will be cut off from the community. And I will destroy anyone among you who does any kind of work on that day. You must do no work at all! This is a permanent law for you, and it must be observed wherever you live. This will be a Sabbath day of total rest for you, and on that day you must humble yourselves. This time of rest and fasting will begin the evening before the Day of Atonement and extend until evening of that day."

Leviticus 23:27-32

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies
"And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, who try to look pale and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I assure you, that is the only reward they will ever get. But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. Then no one will suspect you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in secret. And your Father, who knows all secrets, will reward you.[108] **(Matthew 6:16-18)** Much of the time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because now it was after the Fast. **(Acts 27:9)**	Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the menorah, the table and the consecrated bread; this was called the Set Apart Place. Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Set Apart Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now. When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.[109] **(Hebrews 9:1-7)**

108 See Isaiah 58:1-14.

109 Rav Shaul continues and explains that Y'shua is now the High Priest, yet in spite of this fact he still keeps Yom Kippur in the Temple (Acts 27:9)! Y'shua did not command his disciples to stop observing Yom Kippur; neither did Rav Shaul discontinue observing this Feast.

Feast of Tabernacles

"Now, on the first day of the Festival of Shelters, after you have harvested all the produce of the land, you will begin to celebrate this seven-day festival to YHWH. Remember that the first day and closing eighth day of the festival will be days of total rest. On the first day, gather fruit from citrus trees, and collect palm fronds and other leafy branches and willows that grow by the streams. Then rejoice before YHWH your Elohim for seven days. You must observe this seven-day festival to YHWH every year. This is a permanent law for you, and it must be kept by all future generations. During the seven festival days, all of you who are Israelites by birth must live in shelters. This will remind each new generation of Israelites that their ancestors had to live in shelters when I rescued them from the land of Egypt. I, YHWH am your Elohim."
Leviticus 23:39-43

Gospels and Emissaries
After this, Y'shua stayed in Galilee, going from village to village. He wanted to stay out of Judea where the Jewish leaders were plotting his death. But soon it was time for the Festival of Shelters, and Y'shua's brothers urged him to go to Judea for the celebration. "Go where your followers can see your miracles!" they scoffed. "You can't become a public figure if you hide like this! If you can do such wonderful things, prove it to the world!" For even his brothers didn't believe in him. Y'shua replied, "Now is not the right time for me to go. But you can go anytime, and it will make no difference."… But after his brothers had left for the festival, Y'shua also went, though secretly, staying out of public view. **(Yochanan 7:1-6, 10)**

Nazirite Vow

Then YHWH said to Moshe, "Speak to the people of Israel and give them these instructions: If some of the people, either men or women, take the special vow of a Nazirite, setting themselves apart to YHWH in a special way, they must give up wine and other alcoholic drinks. They must not use vinegar made from wine, they must not drink other fermented drinks or fresh grape juice, and they must not eat grapes or raisins. As long as they are bound by their Nazirite vow, they are not allowed to eat or drink anything that comes from a grapevine, not even the grape seeds or skins. They must never cut their hair throughout the time of their vow, for they are holy and set apart to YHWH.
Numbers 6:1-5

Gospels and Emissaries
But the angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah! For Elohim has heard your prayer, and your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son! And you are to name him Yochanan. You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice with you at his birth, for he will be great in the eyes of YHWH. He must never touch wine or hard liquor, and he will be filled with the Set Apart Spirit, even before his birth. **(Luke 1:13-15)** Paul stayed in Corinth for some time after that and then said good-bye to the brothers and sisters and sailed for the coast of Syria, taking Priscilla and Aquila with him. (Earlier, at Cenchrea, Paul had shaved his head according to Jewish custom, for he had taken a vow.) **(Acts 18:18)** The next day Paul went in with us to meet with Ya'akov, and all the elders of the Jerusalem assembly were present. After greetings were exchanged, Paul gave a detailed account of the things Elohim had accomplished among the Gentiles through his ministry. After hearing this, they praised Elohim. But then they said, "You know, dear brother, how many thousands of Jews have also believed, and they all take the law of Moshe very seriously. Our Jewish Messianics here at Jerusalem have been told that you are teaching all the Jews living in the Gentile world to turn their backs on the laws of Moshe. They say that you teach people not to circumcise their children or follow other Jewish customs. Now what can be done? For they will certainly hear that you have come. "Here's our suggestion. We have four men here who have taken a vow and are preparing to shave their heads. Go with them to the Temple and join them in the purification ceremony, and pay for them to have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know that the rumors are all false and that you yourself observe the Jewish laws. "As for the Gentile Christians, all we ask of them is what we already told them in a letter: They should not eat food offered to idols, nor consume blood, nor eat meat from strangled animals, and they should stay away from all sexual immorality." So Paul agreed to their request, and the next day he went through the purification ritual with the men and went to the Temple. Then he publicly announced the date when their vows would end and sacrifices would be offered for each of them. **(Acts 21:18-26)**

Circumcision

"I will continue this everlasting covenant between us, generation after generation. It will continue between your offspring and me forever. And I will always be your Elohim and the Elohim of your descendants after you..."Your part of the agreement," Elohim told Abraham, "is to obey the terms of the covenant. You and all your descendants have this continual responsibility. This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised; the flesh of his foreskin must be cut off. This will be a sign that you and they have accepted this covenant. Every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This applies not only to members of your family, but also to the servants born in your household and the foreign-born servants whom you have purchased. All must be circumcised. Your bodies will thus bear the mark of my everlasting covenant. Anyone who refuses to be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family for violating the covenant."

Genesis 17:7-14

Gospels and Emissaries	The Major Testimonies	The Ten
Eight days later, when the baby was circumcised, he was named Y'shua, the name given him by the angel even before he was conceived. Then it was time for the purification offering, as required by the law of Moshe after the birth of a child; so his parents took him to Jerusalem to present him to YHWH. The law of YHWH says, "If a woman's first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to YHWH." So they offered a sacrifice according to what was required in the law of YHWH –"either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." **(Luke 2:21-24)** Paul and Silas went first to Derbe and then on to Lystra. There they met Timothy, a young disciple whose mother was a Jewish believer, but whose father was a Greek. Timothy was well thought of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium, so Paul wanted him to join them on their journey. In deference to the Jews of the area, he arranged for Timothy to be circumcised before they left, for everyone knew that his father was a Greek. Then they went from town to town, explaining the decision regarding the commandments that were to be obeyed, as decided by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. So the assemblies were strengthened in their faith and grew daily in numbers. **(Acts 16:1-5)**	A man is not a Jew if he is **only** one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code.[110] Such a man's praise is not from men, but from Elohim.[111] **(Romans 2:28-29)**	Not even those who are circumcised obey the Torah[112], yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your flesh. **(Galatians 6:13)**

110 Within "the written code" which is Torah, it is extremely evident that ritual alone cannot bring salvation. Rather we are obedient to the Commandment simply because YHWH gave it and by Faith we learn to love and trust YHWH within our hearts. YHWH promises to write His Word upon our hearts and has made us a Kedoshim (Set Apart People) according to the Image of Elohim, which is Mashiyach. To understand this work of the heart in Torah, see Lev. 26:40-46; Deut. 10:12-11:1; 30:6; 32:46, 47; Jeremiah 4:4.

111 Rav Shaul clearly states that both outward and inward circumcision is required; that obedience to one literally creates the benefits of the other. Many other statements of Rav Shaul join the outward and inward concepts together, but here they are brought together in the same sentence and concluded that it is Elohim who praises the one who keeps the Commandment, not man.

112 In other words, if they keep this part of the Torah, they should be consistent by keeping the others, as well. Ya'akov says the same thing that he who is circumcised is obligated to obey the rest of the Torah; that he also refers to as the law of liberty.

Tradition

The Hebrew word *minhag* (customs or tradition), appears only twice (and in the same verse) in the Tanakh: *"And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and comes not again: and the minhag (driving) is like the minhag (driving) of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he nahag (drives) with madness"* (2 Kings 9:20). Is it not ironic that Jehu's "driving" reputation is tied in with what is arguably the most important term of rabbinical Jewish identity? Tradition.

The Pharisees (forefathers of Orthodox Judaism) teach that one must drive or "conduct" themselves according to "tradition" – but, of course, that's simply a "traditional" understanding. When a word such as *minhag* is used so infrequently it indicates that it is of relatively little importance. However, rare terms are famous for being spun into highly spiritualized and modernized religious ideals. Certainly a person's driving style has a lot to say about their character; Jehu's reflected a wild-eyed fellow full of good intentions, although he was way off the mark: *"But Jehu took no heed to walk in the Torah of YHWH the Elohim of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin"* (2 Kings 10:31). Tevye (Fiddler on the Roof) wasn't kidding when he cried, "Tradition, Tradition, Tradition!" For many Jews tradition is bigger than YHWH; it is "Jewish identity." Sadly, most see Torah as "tradition" instead of the Way to develop a personal relationship with YHWH Elohim Chayim.

Although "tradition" is full of good intentions, it is the "straw man" of rabbinical Judaism. Many "Jewish" traditions have no merit in Torah and, in fact, this is the underlying cause of why most Jews reject Torah and are kept from knowing YHWH and His Mashiyach. Rabbinical tradition is self promoting; it is what validates rabbinical authority. According to the Rabbis, a Jewish person cannot observe Torah without the help of the Rabbis. Torah is made to be very complicated and not easily accessible for the uneducated, untrained Jew. Some of the traditional Jewish prayers have acrostics embedded within them of the name of the sage who wrote the prayer, which is rather self promoting. How did this happen that a man would even think to arrange the words of a prayer so that his own name would be remembered while praying to the Master YHWH? Why would a man ever think to preface prayer "based on the tradition of our wise and discerning teachers" if tradition were not so highly esteemed as the mediator between man and YHWH? The Rabbis stand in place of the Ruach haKodesh, preventing a Jew to enter in without some sort of rabbinical sponsorship. This is tradition; but tradition is simply man doing what is right in his own eyes, usurping YHWH's authority over the souls of others. Y'shua addressed the matter with these words:

> *"Why also do you transgress against the Commandments of Elohim because of your traditions? For Elohim said, "Honor your father and mother, and anyone who reviles his father and his mother let him be put to death?" But you say anyone who says to a father or to a mother, "My offering is whatever you have gained by me," then he does not need to honor his father or mother.* ***And you nullify the Word of Elohim because of your tradition.*** *Hypocrites! Well did Yesha'yahu prophesy concerning you and said, "This people honor me with their lips, but their heart is very far from me."* ***And they revere me in vain, while they teach the doctrines of the commandments of the sons of men"*** (Matthew 15:3-9).

Rav Shaul explains that when he was being called into the Malchut Elohim that he sought Mashiyach rather than conferring with flesh and blood (the traditions of others): *"And how greatly advanced I was in (Orthodox) Judaism, superior to most of my countrymen who were also my kin. And, in particular, how zealous I was with respect to the teaching of my fathers. But when (Elohim) willed it, He who set me apart from the womb and from my mother, called me to His grace. In order to reveal the manifestation of His son that I preached to the nations, I did not explain this to flesh and blood"* (Galatians 1:14-16). Obviously when Rav Shaul tried to explain Mashiyach to traditional Jews, most of what he said would be filtered through their traditional

understandings or many would ask their hierarchical authorities to do their thinking for them. The end result for many, would be to make a broad sweeping turn right back into their religious comfort zones.

On the other hand, well-worn Christian perceptions of Judaism are also teeming with ideas about Jewish "tradition." Awraham, Yitzkhakh and Ya'akov, however, were *not* men of tradition; they lived their whole lives without ever applying the word tradition to their observance of Torah! Our forefathers observed the Word of YHWH and grew in the Perfection of Mashiyach long before Jewish traditions were invented by the Pharisees and other Jewish sects. Furthermore, Shabbat and the Moedim are not "traditions" either. It is ignorance to think of the Word of YHWH in this manner. The *Mitzvot*, *Eduyot*, *Chuqqim*, *Mishpatim*, *Derek* of YHWH are *Kadosh* (Set Apart) as the Word of YHWH that are the manifestation of Mashiyach's government. Tradition may be a useful term for an outsider to compare one cultural tradition to that of another, because an outsider is not defined by Mashiyach or Torah in such a way that their being and identity is bound up in Mashiyach and Torah. But rabbinical Judaism asserts the authority of tradition over Jewish souls by holding their own authority on an equal or higher footing with the Word of YHWH, rather than being subject to YHWH.

Rabbinical spin doctors like to use the following verse to give themselves authority to breed traditions "equal to Torah": *"According to the peh (mouth) of the torah which they shall teach you, and according to the mishpat (judgment) which they shall tell you, you shall do: you shall not decline from the davar (word) which they shall show you, to the right hand, nor to the left"* (D'varim/Deut. 17:11).

From the context of this verse one can easily see how evil "tradition" of man is: *"If there arise a matter too hard for you in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within your gates: then shall you arise, and get thee up into the place which YHWH your Elohim shall choose; And you shall come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall show you the Word of judgment: And you shall do according to the word of their mouth, which they of that place which YHWH shall choose shall show thee; and you shall observe to do according to all that they inform thee"* (D'varim/Deut. 17:8-10).

While YHWH's authority is revealed through *"priests the Levites"* who are qualified men accountable to YHWH, Judgment is to be levied by YHWH Himself. But rabbinical tradition often annuls the Word of YHWH, even to the point of changing words and concepts in the Torah and Prophets to suit their tradition. YHWH says: *"You shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish from it, that you may keep the commandments of YHWH your Elohim which I command you"* (D'varim/Deut. 4:2). Sages invented a "*gezeirah*," a religious "fence" around Torah where they've added thousands of *minhagim* (traditions) which they esteem as equal in authority to the *Mitzvot* (Commandments) of Torah. This is clearly adding to the Word of YHWH, which is wickedness. Here are some brief examples of how rabbinical tradition puts a spin on Torah:

1) The first of the *Eser haDibrot* (Ten Commandments) says: I AM YHWH. He didn't say "HaShem" or "Adonai." Rabbinical tradition makes void the Name of YHWH by refusing to verbally proclaim the Name which was removed from 134 places in the Tanakh, and replaced with the word Adonai. It is no coincidence that many of these 134 places refer to the ***Word*** of YHWH, which is Mashiyach – very instrumental verses that reveal the identity of Mashiyach. But obviously, the Pharisees don't want people to know about the true Mashiyach coming in the Name of YHWH.

2) Rabbis worship an idol called "oral torah" which they tout as more authoritative than the written Torah. Rambam's Introduction to the Mishnah reads: "*If there are 1000 prophets, all of them of the stature of Eliyah and Elisha, giving a certain interpretation,*

and 1001 rabbis giving the opposite interpretation, you shall incline after the majority and the instruction according to the 1001 rabbis, not according to the 1000 prophets… Elohim did not permit us to learn from the prophets, only from the rabbis who are men of logic and reason." Clearly, the Rabbis' self-made authority is at war with the Prophets of YHWH! YHWH said, "You shall have no other gods before me," but the Rabbis have made a deity out of their tradition. In rabbinical lore it is taught that if you were to obtain counsel from one of the great Sages it is as though you had heard right from YHWH Himself.

3) Noah built the ark in the Name of YHWH. Awraham declared the Name of YHWH to his 318 trained men. Moshe declared the Name of YHWH to Pharaoh. King Dawid and all the Prophets declared the Name of YHWH. Mashiyach Y'shua and his disciples declared the Name of YHWH. The Prophets of YHWH revealed that all the Earth is going to Fear the Name of YHWH. But the lore of Pharisees insists that the Name of YHWH is too *Kadosh* (Set Apart) to pronounce – philosophy that became the central theme of a big cover-up to hide the Name of YHWH from the world. Rabbinical Judaism uses Elokim, HaShem, Adonai and other substitute titles in violation of the Third Commandment: *"You shall not take the Name of YHWH in vain"* or distort, or bring it to nothing.

4) Shabbat was given to Adam and Eve and all of mankind thousands of years before the Pharisees came on the scene – which effectively renders useless the idea that "Shabbat is only for the Jews." Isaiah 56:3 and 4 states that the *nekar* (complete stranger or alien) is to keep Shabbat. Isaiah 66:23 states that *"all flesh"* will keep Shabbat. The "Children of Israel" who came out of Egypt, who were an *erev rav* (mixed multitude) from all nations under heaven, kept Shabbat because they had entered into Covenant with YHWH to become part of the "Children of Israel" and the "Seed of Awraham." The Shabbat of YHWH is *not* a "Jewish Shabbat" to be kept by Jews only as rabbinical tradition insists.

5) Rabbis have a habit of exercising traditional religious authority to overrule non-religious fathers and mothers. If parents do not come under rabbinical authority, Rabbis will direct their children to dishonor them in order to follow their rabbinical traditions, which is extremely anti-Torah.

6) Rabbis are guilty of slandering Y'shua because they have dared to refer to him as a *mamzer* (bastard) and a breaker of Torah. They've even gone so far as to hold mock funerals for fellow Jews who chose to follow Y'shua as Mashiyach. Most Jews know that if you slander a person, it is as though you murdered them; if you even *think* hatred towards another person, it is as though you have murdered them! Still, this hatred against Y'shua and those who follow him has become part of rabbinical "tradition," contrary to Torah (see Vayikra/Lev. 19:16).

7) Torah instructs that if someone commits adultery they are to be stoned to death. The innocent party may re-marry; but in order to do so, a Beit Din must first provide a proper bill of divorcement. However, Rabbis – who like to "sit in the seat of Moses" – have totally ignored the rules and continue officiating over the re-marriage of adulterers.

8) To bolster their income, some Rabbis charge exorbitant "handling fees" for marriage ceremonies, bar mitzvahs, etc. Some even conduct palm readings and employ the use of witchcraft to make extra money on the side – all of which is very high-handed rebellion against Torah.

9) The Talmud has plenty of anti-Y'shua rhetoric, bearing false witness against Y'shua by charging him to be a breaker of Torah. As Yehudim, Y'shua and his mother were to be afforded the same honor as any other Jew, yet rabbinical tradition stands on the shoulders

of the false (paid) witnesses from the mock trial before Pilate. Talmud contains spurious and unqualified testimony regarding Y'shua's trial, yet Rabbis, very contrary to Torah, uphold the lies of their forefathers.

10) Covetousness has become embedded within the religious worlds, but it is very anti-Torah. A famous rabbinical tradition is to publicly name benefactors, put names on plaques, write them on the entrances of buildings and on seats in the synagogues, etc. In Matthew 6 Mashiyach taught against public demonstrations of *tsedaka* (almsgiving) because it spawns covetousness; nevertheless, if covetousness is not actively opposed neither would public demonstrations of *tsedaka* be opposed.

"YHWH has been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say you unto them, Thus says YHWH of hosts; Turn ye unto me, says YHWH of hosts, and I will turn unto you, says YHWH of hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus says YHWH of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, says YHWH. Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as YHWH of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so has he dealt with us" (Zechariah 1:2-6).

Rabbis use their self-made "tradition" to usurp authority unto themselves as Levites, Priests or Judges. Pinchas was given the office of Cohen (priest) forever (B'midbar 25:13) because he sanctified the Name of YHWH, when the rest of the Levites were failing miserably. Yehoshua ben Nun was given high recognition by YHWH (B'midbar 27:21) because he believed upon YHWH, listened to the Ruach haKodesh and sanctified the Name of YHWH before the people. Neither Miriam, Aaron, nor Moshe entered into the Promised Land because of YHWH's Judgment, but Caleb who was a "Jewish convert" entered the land with the full blessings of YHWH. The Rabbis clearly show that, while they fear man, they have no fear of YHWH. Much of rabbinical Judaism has followed after Baal, which is also evident by their choice of fashion:

"I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests; And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by YHWH, and that swear by Malcham; And them that are turned back from YHWH; and those that have not sought YHWH, nor enquired for him" (Zephaniah 1:4-6).

Chemarims are "black robed priests." The black clothes of the religious symbolizes haSatan, as dirty deeds are often done in the dark where there is no accountability. In the Tanakh black clothing (sack cloth) was used in mourning or in death. No priests of YHWH wore black as it represents death; therefore, religious Jews who wear black are clearly showing by their tradition that they are *not* YHWH's priesthood! Black attire has become common among religious Jews simply because of peer group status quo identity pressure. Rabbinical "tradition" is the Baal of the Rabbis, but no man can serve two masters (Matt. 6:24); we will either serve Baal or YHWH.

True Jewish identity is rooted in Torah and Mashiyach, regardless of what tradition has to say. YHWH's chosen people are called to be a *Kedoshim*, Set Apart unto YHWH and His Mashiyach rather than succumb to the traditions of men, regardless of how much prestige or esteem one supposes to enjoy for a season.

We must remember that YHWH fights for the Jewish people when they observe Torah, and that He fights against them when they willfully neglect Torah. As such, rabbinical tradition is largely responsible for many of the atrocities against the Jewish people. But the Rabbis prefer to lay blame on the secular (hiloni) Jews for not following their traditions. Jews become prey to genocidal maniacs like those who carried out the Inquisitions and pogroms when they spurn

Torah and Mashiyach. Jewish men, women and children would never have been butchered at the hands of demonic regimes if they had put their trust in YHWH rather than in religious institutions and governments. YHWH is exceedingly clear that His protection is a direct result of our level of respectful obedience towards His instruction (Deuteronomy 11 & 12). The tragic result then is it only takes a few false teachers to deceive multitudes and put them into very great danger.

Rabbinical Judaism is clearly the largest visible priesthood of the Jewish people today. If rabbinical Judaism had been sanctifying the Name of YHWH and upholding Torah, YHWH would respond and do battle against our enemies, but this is far from what is happening today. Israel is being put again under a curse for turning from YHWH and His Mashiyach. Jerusalem is being trodden asunder by Gentiles by foreign anti-Torah One World Governments that know not YHWH nor His Mashiyach. Pagans have taken government control and parades of sodomy are made through the streets of Jerusalem because tradition has been elevated over and above YHWH and His Torah. This is our punishment for not sanctifying the Name of YHWH and upholding Mashiyach ben Yoseph as the Word of YHWH. Every Jew is being punished because of the evils of tradition…tradition. However, it is truth, through an intimate personal relationship with YHWH and His Mashiyach that is the ultimate goal between YHWH and mankind, not tradition.

Twelve Tribes

Ya'akov (James), addressing Israelites/Jews living among and as Gentiles, wrote to the Twelve Tribes scattered *"among the peoples"* (Ya'akov/James 1:1), which is a key divergence from "nations." In every culture including Jewish, there is a distinction made between ***the people*** (Israel) and ***the peoples*** (everyone else). In this case the phrase ***b'ammeh*** literally means "in/among peoples" with the B proclitic having these prepositional meanings attached to ***ammeh***. When we say "nation" in English, we envision a fixed place with borders and limits set by treaty and legal convention. While there have surely been "peoples" living in these locations for long periods of time, we do not consider the nation dissolved if many were to pack up and leave. By contrast, James is writing to Jews of the dispersion, and his intent is clearly to pull them out from their *national ties* and have them return to their *tribal/ethnic* roots.

The reason we can be certain of this has to do with the second term: *"For if there come into your **assembly** a man with rings of gold or splendid garments and there come in a poor man in sordid garments"* (Ya'akov 2:2). Here the term ***eidta*** (assembly; Greek *ekklesia*) refers to a body of people, which is generally used by Renewed Covenant writers to address a group of believers. This term is closest to the Hebrew term ***adat***, usually "congregation" in English (Exodus 12:3) and is indicative of a general gathering of believers. Although its Hebrew counterpart is widely used in the Tanakh to describe such groups, *adat/eidta* or *ekklesia* is a later concept that emerges in the letters of Paul and others in the Renewed Covenant.

The more primitive and direct word James uses is ***knooshta***, usually translated as "*assembly*." It is also the word from which the Israeli Cabinet "***Knesset***," is derived. However, a more fundamental use of the word, and the one most relevant here, is that ***knooshta*** is the original word from which the Greek word *synagogue* was derived. Ya'akov is writing from *his **Beit Knesset*** (synagogue), and sending his letter to Jewish believers among the nations regarding matters in *their **Beit Knessets***, which must by virtue of their taking instruction from James, be Netzarim.

So what we are seeing then, is an international network of "synagogues" (meeting places) comprised exclusively of believers in Y'shua Messiah. These "synagogues" also, as evidenced by the letter sent out from Jerusalem in Acts 15, are clearly comprised of both Jews and those who *"Fear Elohim"* (Gentile proselytes) who worship and study together, just as their conventional Israeli counterparts (Acts 10). These letters also serve as evidence that Ya'akov was the leader of the Rosh Beit Din in Jerusalem who held sway over all halachic or legal matters affecting the worship of Jews and Gentiles alike, regardless of where they were located.

Unity

Unity of the Name of YHWH

"Hear, O Israel: YHWH our Elohim is One YHWH."
D'varim/Deuteronomy 6:4

YHWH guards and protects His Set Apart Name according to Righteousness. YHWH is *"the Name above all names."* He commands that individuals guard the Unity of the Name of YHWH by sanctifying and setting apart His Name from all others. The Name of Yahweh reflects ***life*** itself. YHWH is the Self Existent One who "breathes" the ***Neshama*** (Breath) of life into each of us. *Neshama* (nesh-aw-maw) refers to your *spirit*, the part of you that creates and selects thoughts and makes choices and takes action and makes you radically distinctive from everyone else. Each individual comprehends the Unity of the Name of YHWH according to the personal levels of unity within the soul, and according to manifold impressions and ideas about life, eternity, infinity, the universe, etc.

The Mind of YHWH designed each individual's *neshama* (spirit) and through the natural world we are taught about the spiritual world and our relationship to the Almighty. The Name of YHWH was breathed to Adam along with the sound of His Name. His Name is to be breathed and vocalized in a very unique and special way. May our souls forever esteem the awesome Name of Yahweh according to His eternal Justice and Mercy. May His Name forever be with us and precious to us according to His Word. The Name of Yahweh is pronounced as follows:

YAH—WEH

Breathe ***IN*** while pronouncing "Yah"	Breathe ***OUT*** while pronouncing "Weh"

YHWH is the life force Who gave us the *spirit of speech* (Gen. 2:7 targum) along with unique spiritual capabilities to seek and develop a relationship with Him. As important as it is for a newborn baby to inhale their first breath of air, so is the spiritual man sustained by "breathing" the Spirit of YHWH.

Within the Name of YHWH His Unity and Authority is revealed, which is why His Name is mentioned well over 7,000 times from Genesis to Revelation. Our spiritual nature becomes transformed into His Image when we set the Name of YHWH apart, meditate on His Name and His Word, and keep His Commandments.

YHWH is more important than Life itself because He is the Architect of life. Life originated from YHWH; therefore, His Name must have the highest place in our souls. Many have been told that the original pronunciation of the Name of YHWH has been lost, but YHWH preserved His Name through His Word, according to the Ruach haKodesh and Mashiyach! *"O YHWH, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto you from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things where there is no profit. Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is YHWH"* (Jeremiah 16:19-21).

Unity of Mashiyach

"I and the Father are one."
Yochanan 10:30

The intimate relationship between Father and Son unfolds in Matthew 6:9-13 with the *Slotha d'Maran*, or Prayer of our Master, and progressive revelation continuing in Matthew 26:39, 42 and so on. Put simply, if Y'shua is YHWH, then is he talking to himself? The answer, of course,

is NO! But, in order to understand we must go deep into the Tanakh to the following milestone passages:

1) In Exodus 23:20-22 we find mention of the only Messenger that YHWH sent to Israel who *"has My Name in him."* This is *key* because every other messenger has YHWH's title – EL (MichaEL, RaphaEL, UriEL, etc.) in their names. But Y'shua's name means, "YHWH is salvation" which is tied to prophecy about him in places like Jeremiah 23:5-6, and fulfilled in John 17:11. Mashiyach has a superior name to the other messengers (Hebrews 1:1-5) and a Name in him that is above all other names (Colossians 1:16-19, Philippians 2:9-10). This means that Y'shua and this Messenger, who are one and the same, have the Name Yah rather than El/Eloah/Elohim.

2) The other aspect of Exodus 23:20-22 is that YHWH warns that this Messenger will not forgive Israel if they sin; implying that he had the independent power to do so, but would not on this occasion. Such ability was not ever afforded any other heavenly messenger. To see how this might manifest with Mashiyach's power and office, please see Matthew 9:5-8.

3) Isaiah 9:6 tells us that one of the names of Mashiyach is "the Everlasting Father," who is obviously YHWH Himself. Then Isaiah 11:1-2 tells us that Mashiyach as the Root of Jesse will have the Spirit of YHWH rest inside him! Incidentally, the Spirit of YHWH and the Ruach haKodesh are also one and the same, as evidenced by Psalm 51:1-11 and Isaiah 63:1-11.

4) Perhaps the most essential passage is in Zechariah 12:10, where the only begotten Son is killed but YHWH is "pierced." The Hebrew here, in spite of rabbinic argumentation to the contrary, could not be clearer. The phrase in question is *et asher dakaru*. The *et* serves as a direct object pointer; it shows what part of a Hebrew sentence is receiving the action. So in Genesis 1:1 we are told *et hashamayim v'et ha'aretz*, with the *et* meaning that the heavens and the Earth are receiving the action of being created. On this everyone agrees, but the same rabbis who agree with this usage everywhere else in Tanakh turn a blind eye here. In this passage, it can only read as *"to whom pierced they,"* and since YHWH is speaking, He is being pierced! And yet the rest of the passage talks of people mourning for the man as *"an only begotten son"*! How can this be? The Son whose flesh is pierced contains an occurrence (*qnoma* in Aramaic) of YHWH's Spirit, so while it is the flesh that is literally pierced and dies, the Spirit of YHWH is pierced too, but of course, cannot die.

5) Finally Isaiah 53:1: *"to whom has the arm of YHWH been revealed?"* This is the only acceptable form of "Godhead" in Scripture. Clearly not a Trinity of three separate beings (or persons), because the arm is not a separate entity from the rest of the body and has no independent will. The "arm" moves only with the power and control from the mind. In the same way YHWH's nature is manifest as an occurrence within the Son that is separate but side-by-side with his human nature. These two natures then communicate with one another; thus explaining why Y'shua is not talking to himself when he prays to his Father. This fact is also why sometimes Y'shua says things like, "My teaching is not my own" and "I can do nothing without my Father" on the one hand but on the other he says, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father" and "I and my Father are one of the same." This indicates a 100 percent divine nature that exists in a 100 percent human soul and flesh, where one or the other talks through Y'shua. But the human is subject to the divine (again, "Not my will...") which is the only way the Scripture cannot be broken. It is not Trinity but neither does this deny the divine aspects in Y'shua himself. It is also the real meaning behind, *"No one comes to the Father but by me."* See also John 5:26.

Unity versus Hierarchy

Mashiyach teaches us how to nurture our relationship with YHWH; he came to bring a relationship. Nevertheless, it's been said that when the "Gospel" went to Rome it became an institution, and when it went west it became a business enterprise. Religion is the biggest business on Earth and practically all modern "priesthoods" have fashioned their enterprises after the model of hierarchical Babylon.

YHWH says, *"I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the* ***Chemarim*** *with the priests; And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that* ***swear by YHWH****, and that* ***swear by Malcham****; And them that are turned back from YHWH; and those that have not sought YHWH, nor enquired for him"* (Zephaniah 1:4-6). Most religions teach *some* of the truth but the vast majority also swears by *Malcham* which is represented by any leadership hierarchy that establishes traditions in opposition to the Word of YHWH. Certainly Christianity and Judaism contain many elements of Truth, but their hierarchies (or denominations) routinely issue credentials and authority to leaders whose qualifications are not valid by Torah and Renewed Covenant standards.

Chemarim, as mentioned before, means "black robed priests" which are the priests of Baal (Lord) who function under the authority of man whose underlying humanism is haSatan (the Adversary) who opposes the Government of Mashiyach. Both Christian and Jewish leaders have adopted black robes (darkness) to reflect their religious authority. Many orthodox Jews and Christians even wear traditional black (or dark) costumes to distinguish their religious sects. Both the autocratic spirit of Roman "superpower" civilization and the hierarchy of Baal play important roles within the modern Greco-Roman church and Judaism.

Y'shua instructs that *"where two or three are assembled in my name, there I am also among them"* – which is precisely the function of a Beit Din. A Beit Din is a group of men who are qualified according to Scripture, who individually and collectively seek YHWH's counsel. This principle is derived from B'midbar/Numbers 35:30 and D'varim/Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15 which requires two or more witnesses petition YHWH to obtain His Judgment. This is a legal requirement that ensures YHWH's authority, rather than man's, is established. (See also 1 Cor. 14:27-29; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19; Hebrews 10:28.) The individuals YHWH raises up are well qualified to do His bidding; but there is a vast difference between religious hierarchies and the Government of Mashiyach. (See chart on following page for some examples.)

Religion is big business. Religious hierarchies posture that truth is very difficult and complex to understand, but they have credentials and preaching that proves they have entered into "deep spiritual intelligence." In reality, what religious leaders do is "market" themselves; they run internal "polls" to know what people want to talk about; they are masters of "current events" and ride on macro gossip trends which keep them on top of their game. Some of these hierarchical leaders have even written books about how to posture and market and become "successful" and popular. Others are simply enemy-centered using other religions to spar with, while being utterly unable to come up with anything original on their own.

The majority establishes the authority of hierarchy, which is why there are some 33,800 Christian denominations on Earth. Each organization has leaders who seek the majority vote of their followers. When the doors of the church or synagogue close and everyone is inside, the hierarchical leader simply needs to maintain the majority vote of his followers to stay "in power." This seems right in the eyes of man, but this is how Babylon operates and how Baal and haSatan began their ministries. The example that Y'shua set is exactly the opposite; he served and wasn't "lording" authority over people or seeking a majority vote.

YHWH's Leadership	Man's Hierarchies
Qualified by Torah Valiant – Fears YHWH – Truthful – Hates Covetousness Wise – Understanding – Knowledgeable (Sh'mot/Exodus 18:21; D'varim/Deut. 1:13)	Qualified by man's Credentials University or Seminary Approved (gains the respect of men by being qualified and approved by man's traditions)
Qualified by Serving	Qualified by "good" Preaching
Teaches Torah	Teaches denominational or religious traditions
Agreement in the Ruach haKodesh	Exercises veto authority over others
All men participate in leadership responsibilities	Leaders hold meetings for other men to attend
Transparent to all	Private life and "public life"
Accessible to all	"Secretary" screens people
Responsible to YHWH and His people	Responsible to "up-line" hierarchy or no one
Disciples and motivates souls in Mashiyach and Torah	Wields power over the souls of others
Humility and meekness	Great in the eyes of man, "Rab" (great one)
Seeks the Kingdom of YHWH	Seeks support (finances) for big vision
Makes Disciples	Increases size of membership
Makes Disciples	Makes "friends" of the ministry
Elevates Truth	Elevates tradition
Offers freedom from sin	Offers religious solution to cope with sin
Identity is in Y'shua	Identity in the institution or denomination (brand)
Everyone Created for YHWH's purpose	Us good and them bad (or not as good as us)
Glories in the Kingdom of Elohim	Glories in large buildings and congregations
Leads by YHWH's Spirit	Follows majority (the democratic or popular vote)

YHWH's leadership is comprised of His servants who are qualified by His Word. His servants serve Him through each component of life, according to sustained righteous lifestyles. Every human being is fallible; everyone is liable to err and can be deceived at times, but false religious leaders have no shame. Oftentimes, to save face and maintain their pride, they willfully uphold popular false doctrines and the evils of their institutions that are contrary to YHWH and His Mashiyach. These hierarchical leaders are called "fierce wolves" (Acts 20:29).

Hierarchical leaders put authority over men's souls by making them subject to their churches and institutions. Those who elevate men (or women) with flattering titles are also contributing to the loss of their own sovereignty in Mashiyach. Men who ask to be referred to as "father", "holy father" or "reverend" are demanding fear or respect unto themselves that belongs to YHWH and His Mashiyach. By lessening the sovereignty of the "sheep" the hierarchies wield greater control over their congregants who are often unable able to distinguish between the authority of "the church" and responsibilities that are due unto YHWH. This is one reason why the Harlot Church became so contemptuous against Torah, because Torah upholds the sovereignty of each individual in the "fear of Elohim." Torah also promotes a spiritual relationship between each individual and YHWH, which empowers each person to refrain from disobedience towards YHWH and His Mashiyach.

Week after week billions sit under some man's teachings, going to churches, synagogues and mosques. Like children in a school room they learn about life through the opinions of men according to their hierarchy of choice where they feel most comfortable. Precious few people stop to consider why. What makes people think that their hierarchy has all the answers? What makes people think that the hierarchy is going to protect and provide for them? The hierarchies of men are plundering the people they are supposed to love. In reality, the hierarchies and the people go to destruction together hand-in-hand and even now, when haSatan is bringing all his religious hierarchies together under one big umbrella of "one world" perversity, it seems right in the eyes of man; but it is an abomination unto YHWH. The image of Babylon is hierarchy; the really big business of Babylon is government and religion.

Unity is not hierarchy. Unity is equality and servanthood towards each other and each soul in the Community of YHWH is equal. Unity is a product of Righteousness and the thirst for Righteousness is what unites YHWH's people. Y'shua taught: *"Let it not be thus among you, but whoever among you desires to be great, let him be a servant to you."* (Matt. 21:26) and; *"And you should not be called leaders, because one is your leader, the Mashiyach. But he who is greatest among you, let him be a servant to you"* (Matt. 23:10, 11).

Ushanna

It is very evident in Matthew 21:9 that the tens of thousands of Jews who cheered for Y'shua were making the declaration of Psalm 118:25, 26. They recognized Y'shua to be YHWH's Mashiyach. *Ushanna* (Aramaic), *Hoshiana* (Hebrew) or *Hosanna* (English) comes from two words ***yasha*** = save and ***na*** = now. In the context of Matthew 21:9, the people were declaring Y'shua as their King; their deliverance from Rome was something that only a King could accomplish. Those shouting *"Ushanna in the highest"* were under Roman occupation. Many of them lived to witness the Roman armies destroy the Temple, slaughter hundreds of thousands of Jews and carry away tens of thousands of their children as slaves. Under the circumstances, it is very understandable that these people expected Mashiyach to bring physical deliverance, but his objective as Mashiyach ben Yoseph (the suffering servant) was to lead souls into the Malchut (Kingdom of) Elohim. When Spiritual deliverance is accomplished, the physical will follow.

Wheel of Stars

"*Can you bind the beautiful Pleiades? Can you loose the cords of Orion? Can you bring forth the* ***Wheel of Stars***[113] *into its seasons and stand in the path of Ayish/Iyutha (Aldeberan) and her satellites (Hyades). Do you know the laws of the heavens and can you establish their rule over the earth?...Have you given wisdom to the Lance Star (Antares) or intelligence to the Bow Star?"* (Hebrew & Aramaic Job 38:31-33, 38, cross referenced to the translation of T.K. Cheyne: Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1898), pp. 103-107)

All versions of Scripture agree that YHWH says it is He Who brings the Zodiac/constellations/ Wheel of Stars into their seasons, and that He has placed the laws of the heavens above the laws of the Earth, with both heaven and Earth forever submitting to His authority.

The "Wheel" is actually a fixed marker for regions of the sky and has nothing to do with the fact that constellations have shifted from our view because of precession of the Earth's axis.

The current Rabbinic Jewish calendar is a fixed model that came into being long after Hillel the Second in 359 CE. While tradition tells us that it was Hillel's doing, the first full accounting of the Rabbinical calendar in all its details does not occur until the time of Maimonides many centuries later. There is no way to definitively prove that intervening epochs did not add substantially to what Hillel began, and Jewish tradition is replete with examples of ascribing more recent ideas to masters of the distant past, as Moses de Leon did with the Zohar when he claimed it was from a rabbi dead for more than a thousand years before his day.

Nevertheless, let's assume that all the details of the Rabbinic calendar were fixed perfectly in 359 CE and also that it was based on a Babylonian intercalated pattern that was itself based on the work of a Greek named Meton ca 432 BCE.[114]

113 The original translator writes "Zodiac", but this can be a confusing term. Brown Drivers Briggs defines the Hebrew word *mazzaroth*, "the 12 signs of the Zodiac and their 36 associated constellations." It is important that a clear distinction be made between the Zodiac/Wheel of Stars as an absolute marker for a region of the sky as opposed to the dwelling places of false deities.

114 However, the captivity in Babylon is considerably earlier, 586-515 BCE, so it is possible that the intercalculary system Babylon adopted did not extend that far back, although there is good reason to believe that it did.

If we were to place the intercalated system about 800 years before Hillel, as far back as it can go[115] we still have a major problem because there is more than a thousand years of Jewish history to connect with the calendar Moses used; and, of course, much more if we intend to go back to Abraham, Noah, and so on.

Part of the Jewish calendar has always been lunar but since Moses' day those lunar calculations have also been tied to agricultural festivals, but on its own a lunar calendar will fall out of season if a 354 day lunar year were to be followed. Furthermore, the instructions of Genesis 1:14-19 clearly mandate the sun, moon and the stars in the role of keeping the time.

If it is true that the Babylonian Captivity had a huge influence on the timekeeping of the Hebrews and this event is relatively brief and quite late in their history, how much more influence could the far more ancient Egyptian Captivity have played, since they kept a 365 day solar calendar and forced the Hebrews – including Moses – to follow it for more than 400 years?

The intercalated system would then been in existence long before Meton, however the Karaites[116] and other Torah Observant groups claim they have an easy answer. Follow the Torah and check the barley for green ears, and you will always know when the first month is. However Torah-based and simple as this approach may appear, there are many questions left unanswered.

Defining Terms and Laying Down the Law

Lest there be concern or contention that external sources outside the Malchut Elohim should or should not be consulted, let's clearly understand the differences between YHWH's *astronomy* and pagan-corrupted *astrology*: *"And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars—all the heavenly array—do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshiping things YHWH your Elohim has apportioned to all the nations under heaven"* (Deuteronomy 4:19)

"If a man or woman living among you in one of the towns YHWH gives you is found doing evil in the eyes of YHWH your Elohim in violation of his covenant, and contrary to my command has worshiped other gods, bowing down to them or to the sun or the moon or the stars of the sky, and this has been brought to your attention, then you must investigate it thoroughly. If it is true and it has been proved that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, take the man or woman who has done this evil deed to your city gate and stone that person to death" (Deuteronomy 17:2-5).

Going even further, those who attempt to divine destinies from the stars, as opposed to waiting on YHWH who named the stars and controls their movements (Psalm 147:4, Jeremiah 31:35), they are the *"stargazers"* who are strictly condemned: *"All the counsel you have received has only worn you out!* ***Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, let them save you from what is coming upon you. Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. They cannot even save themselves from the power of the flame.*** *There are no coals to warm anyone; there is no fire to sit by. That is all they can do for you—these you have labored with and trafficked with since childhood. Each of them goes on in his error; there is not one that can save you"* (Isaiah 47:13-15). (See also Jeremiah 8:1-3.)

115 Meton (5th century BC) is generally credited for discovering the 19-year cycle; however, some suggest the Chaldean astronomer Kidinnu (4th century BC) discovered the 19-year cycle, but the Babylonians may also have learned of it earlier. They measured the Moon's motion against the stars, so the 235:19 relation may originally have referred to sidereal years, instead of tropical years as it has been used in various calendars; however, ancient astronomers did not make a clear distinction between sidereal and tropical years before Hipparchus discovered precession of the equinoxes c. 130 BC. (Quoted from Wikipedia online) The point is that if we fix this calendar to this timeline, we are still far from the time of Moses and Abraham.

116 The Karaites are a group of Jews established in the Middle Ages who broke with nearly all Rabbinic tradition. Their name is likely derived from the Hebrew *karet*, or "to cut out", as in cutting away the oral traditions that they felt were added to Torah. However while the Karaites may be a relatively modern group, many of their positions are anything but. Many of the positions they currently hold have strident ancient minority voices. Therefore, it is both necessary and important that Karaite views are not dismissed by the misperception that positions they hold are not also ancient.

On the other hand, when the stars witness to their Creator, it is a Set Apart and blessed event (Psalm 19:1-6). Furthermore, when men use them properly in accordance with YHWH's instructions, they are declared righteous (Psalm 8:3-9, 136:9). In many places, Genesis 22:17 being one example, the stars are used as a teaching aid and comfort from YHWH. YHWH-based astronomy has absolutely nothing to do with the precession of constellations that were named after pagan deities. Instead, Torah astronomy examines a section of star lit sky as it appeared at certain times, like during the Patriarchal Age and through to the end of the Late Prophetic period that closes Tanakh. So, it's really about what appeared in Moses' day, not what might have appeared one way then but appears another way now. By "freezing" the canopy of stars as a memorial to a divine event, we eliminate the problems associated with the motions of the earth, precession and the sidereal versus tropical year debate. For these reasons, let's tentatively refer to this system as the "Absolute Zodiac" with a clear proviso again that we are in no way honoring names such as Aquarius, Cancer, and so on, but the One Living Elohim, YHWH, who created the heavenly host to serve both Him and us.

On the Primacy of Source Material

Here is a list of the basic sources used, as well as a brief analysis of why some material should carry more weight than others. The transparency here of categorizing reference materials is for the simple reason that no individual is above correction.

In order of stated importance:

1) Scripture - Hebrew and Aramaic authorities for Tanakh and New Covenant Writings form the most authoritative source material available.

2) Ancient Primary Source Material – The general rule is that the older the source material and/or the nearer to events it describes, the better. One of the major areas where we could use expert testimony is with respect to priestly procedures and service cycles. Ideally, the source we would consult would be:

- Fully established in the Second Temple period, as opposed to harking back to it from centuries later.
- A written manuscript record that is beyond dispute.
- A witness who is in a position to provide comment from direct personal and professional experience on the events described.

As most who have studied the time period know, there are two authorities, that have impeccable Pharisaic and priestly family connections. Both were well respected in their day and have shown great devotion to Torah.

These sources are Josephus Bar Matthias and Philo Judaeus, and they remain our best authorities for just about anything happening from around the Persian period to the destruction of the Second Temple in CE 70. What's more, and in complete contrast to the Rabbis of the Talmud who commented on these times centuries later,[117] Josephus and Philo confirm each other's details, and in one case, the former writes about the latter as a man of high esteem in the Jewish community.

Philo is sometimes accused of being far too eager to combine pagan Greek philosophy with Torah. However, his endorsement by Josephus goes a long way to mitigate this accusation. If Josephus, a devoted Pharisee who spent most of his life in Israel—and who fought against the Romans—can back Philo, it is also very likely that Philo enjoyed normative status by Jews in Israel.[118]

117 On a few occasions our only source for certain relevant information is the Mishnah, and where needed, these are taken into consideration on a case by case basis.

118 Rather, to be precise, that Philo's direct interpretations of Torah were not that off the mark from those in Israel or the Diaspora. It should be noted however, that Philo's veneration of the LXX would have been met with sharp resistance in Israel.

Granted, Josephus is not immune to some scorn in Israel, either. Even today many rabbinic authorities have leveled a charge of "switching sides" against him. They note that his own biography admits that he fought against the Romans, then helped the Romans by interpreting surrender terms to the Jews, and finally moved to Rome where he spent the last three decades of his life after the Jewish War. In all fairness, the counterbalancing facts are that even the father of Rabbinic Judaism, Yochanan ben Zakkai, also cooperated with Rome as the price for preserving the faith. However, if support for a plain reading of Scripture is questionable from these sources, it simply will not be quoted. On the other hand, if such a quote is a logical and very short extension from those plain readings and still not contradictory, then this constitutes valid commentary from these two learned men on the Torah as they understood it.

Finally, Philo could easily be equated in like manner to Rav Shaul, who used quotations from Greek playwrights, philosophers and their popular culture to clarify his original Hebraic points.[119] Philo appears to use his surrounding culture to enable his audience to better understand the genuine and final authority of Torah. He neither bowed to Hellenism, nor suggested the merging/addition of their holidays to those given by YHWH and therefore his attitude speaks volumes towards him being a Pharisaic Jew of the Diaspora.

3) Mishna - the Torah commentary that grew out of Rabbinic Judaism. However, used here with a proverbial grain of salt as we are looking at a body of work that is centuries removed from the primary sources of the period and that frequently has codified information which, while generally correct, is nevertheless emphasizing only certain aspects to advance the religio-political realities of the time. As the reader will see, though, I believe that the key facts in the Mishnah are usually adequate to the task, although certain details and underlying reasons therein may appear suspicious. As another favor, I would ask the reader to wait on the examples I have in mind, when my reasoning for this evaluation will be clearer.

4) The Ephraim Exception – here is one possible source where a more reliable witness may overrule an earlier one. It has to do with the testimony of Mar Ephraim, a Fourth Century Syrian Saint, and one of the foremost authorities the world has ever known on the Peshitta. In this case, even though Ephraim writes 200 or more years after the time of the Mishnah, I believe his commentary in one area supersedes that of the Rabbis.

The issue has to do with the Masoretic reading of Job 38:31, part of the overall quote that we saw at the beginning. The Rabbis have generally favored a reading of the Hebrew Ayish constellation as "the Great Bear". However, the Masoretic Text (Jewish Publication Society 1999 Hebrew English Tanakh) itself references an ancient Aramaic Tanakh reading that identifies the constellation as Iyutha, believed by almost all scholars to designate the star Aldeberan.

Going a step further, this reading of Ayish as Iyutha/Aldeberan is, in turn, backed up with evidence from centuries before Ephraim's time, going back to Babylonian Jews who would later compile the Talmud itself. Ephraim's contribution, then, is simply affirming that very ancient Aramaic understanding.

As a result, it is not just a matter of picking Mar Ephraim over the Mishnah as it is picking the ancestors of the original Mishnah editors and Mar Ephraim over those who came later, because the later authorities clearly have a more subjective agenda than their forebears did.

Finally, the two main sources I use on the Mishnaic side are "The Mishnah" by Jacob Neusner (1992 Yale University Press), and the widely respected works of the 19th Century scholar Alfred Edersheim. Edersheim's treatises such as *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services* have been indispensable resources in making much of this difficult material more accessible to the wider world.

Now that we have the ground rules, let's move on to the case itself.

119 In fact, both Philo and Paul quoted Menander of Ephesus, a very popular playwright of the time.

Signs

Our first step is a radical one in that I am suggesting we simply take Scripture at its word: *"And Elohim said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night,* ***and let them be for signs, seasons, days and years****, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.' And it was so. Elohim made two great lights - the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. Elohim set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And Elohim saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning - the fourth day"* (Genesis 1:14-19).

Now if we go by a plain reading, what we see clearly is:

- The lights in the sky were made to separate the day from the night, give light to the earth; these lights include the sun, the moon and the stars.[120]
- The lights in the sky have a greater one that rules the day (sun) and a lesser one that rules the night (moon).[121]
- The sun, moon and the stars are also to serve as ***signs, seasons, days and years—in that order.***

This last point is the key to understanding the biblical calendar systems. Without the signs, there can be no seasons, days or years. The other parts of time literally wait for the first marker. Now here is another point to bear in mind: *"Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you set their dominion over the earth?"* (Job 38:33)

This is a rhetorical question YHWH asks Job. The point is that Job, who is trying to judge his Maker, cannot do what YHWH is asking. And so, by understanding that the Hebrew style of this passage is really a statement masquerading as a question, we clearly get the answer we need. YHWH has set the laws of the heavens to rule over the laws of the earth! As a result, we see the general pattern that the heavens come first, the Earth second, and nowhere is this truer than with **sky signs** and **earth signs**.

The first place we see the pattern is, of course, in Genesis 1:1, where the heavens are made first, and then the earth. But what exactly is a "sign" anyway? In Genesis 1:14, the Hebrew word *owth* (אוֹת) is meant to designate a banner or flag, a graphic symbol of a spectacular nature that is impossible to miss.[122] Let's examine some other places where this word appears: *"And Elohim said, "This is the* ***sign*** *(אוֹת) of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come****: I have set my rainbow in the clouds****, and it will be the* ***sign*** *(אוֹת)* ***of the covenant between me and the earth.*** *Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between Elohim and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." So Elohim said to Noah, "This is the* ***sign*** *(אוֹת) of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth"* (Genesis 9:12-17).

120 It is fair to point out that the sun and moon are not directly mentioned. However, there is universal agreement that they are meant by the "and it was evening and it was morning" pattern that pervades Genesis 1. Of course, there is also ample evidence that the sun controls the day and the moon the night.

121 For an easy confirmation of this fact, please also consult Jeremiah 31:35.

122 It is important to note that there are other sign types throughout Scripture as well. The kinds we are discussing here are what I term "covenantal signs" in that they relate to calendar, covenant or ritual instruction issues. On the other hand, "situational signs" are just what the name implies, relating solely to a person, event, place or message. So, the mark of Cain relates to his complaint that others will seek to kill him, and that is obviously situational. The same can be said for the vision of the pregnant woman in Revelation, as that presages a future event, not a call for obedience/observance. On the other hand, sometimes situational signs can suggest the other kind, such as in Isaiah 7:1-13. In that case, Ahaz is being asked to request a sign for his comfort that can be "as high as heaven" (sky) or "as low as Sheol" (earth), but when the king does not answer YHWH picks one for him, anyway.

So we see here:

- The sky sign (rainbow) comes first and is the reminder to YHWH of His covenant with the Earth and man.
- The earth sign comes after the sky sign, and is simply the continued existence of the Earth.[123]

Here's another example of the same idea: *"This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the* ***sign*** (אות) *of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner - those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant"* (Genesis 17:10-14).

The sky sign in this case is creation itself, because in Hebrew the words for "in the beginning" (*bereshit*- בראשית) and "covenant" (*breet*- ברית) are related. It therefore can literally be said that the covenant was in creation, and this covenant requires an earth sign of obedience, that of circumcision. Now, let's see another way the sky sign of covenant manifests on Earth: *Then YHWH said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a* ***sign*** (אות) *between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am YHWH, who makes you holy. "****'Observe*** (**shomer**- שמר) *the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it must be put to death; whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from his people. For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to YHWH. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death. The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It will be a* ***sign*** (אות) *between me and the Israelites forever,* ***for in six days YHWH made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.'****" When YHWH finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the Testimony, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of Elohim"* (Exodus 31:12-18).

In another very clear reference, the creation is itself the sky sign. YHWH chose six "days" of creation, and then rested on the seventh, to consider His great work and then to bless it. Without the creation/sky sign, there would be no Sabbath. As for the earth sign, it is the **observance of the Sabbath** by man.[124] This idea, of course, leads to the reasoning why the Hebrew word ***shomer*** is highlighted, which is usually translated as "observe". However, as we will see later, "observe" does not mean so much "to see" as it does "to guard, keep account of." In other words, ***shomer*** is really about counting as a way to ensure accuracy, although repeated sighted patterns are the foundation behind the counting patterns. In this case, and later, we will see other examples; we are literally counting towards each seventh day to mimic the creative cycle of YHWH per His instructions.

But returning to signs, we need to look at two additional examples, both from the book of Exodus. First, when YHWH speaks to Moses (in Exodus 3) His very presence from the Burning Bush is

123 We also see elsewhere in this speech, the definitions that YHWH gives to time in Genesis 8:22: *"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."* This also dovetails, of course, with a solar year.

124 It is also fair to point out that the Sabbath is sometimes described as a *moed*, or appointed time or season. However, this does not mean that the Sabbath is not an absolute seven day cycle that is above the sun and moon. Rather, in places such as Leviticus 23:2-3, the context is with respect to the Sabbath that happens throughout the year. As such, Sabbaths are bound to occur within the years and months described, even as the lunar appointments count days to sacred festivals. On the other hand, the Sabbath also transcends the year in the sense that the counting does not stop between the last day of year X and the first day of year Y. Instead, we keep counting through the weeks even when the previous year gives way to the next one. So, it is actually both a sign and a season, the latter only being in the sense that Sabbaths occur every seventh day, including the weeks that feasts occur.

the sky sign! *"But Moses said to Elohim, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" **And Elohim said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign** (אות) **to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship Elohim on this mountain."** Moses said to Elohim, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The Elohim of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" Elohim said to Moses, "~**I am who I am**. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: '~**I am has sent me to you**.'" Elohim also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'YHWH, the Elohim of your fathers - the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac and the Elohim of Jacob - has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation"* (Exodus 3:11-15).

So YHWH's name - Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh, I am who I am - as well as the third person version that man uses (He is = YHWH), are the banner for Moses. YHWH's assuring promise "and I will be with you" is also a sky sign and, just like before, these sky signs are followed by earth signs here: *"Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'YHWH did not appear to you'?" Then YHWH said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied. YHWH said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. Then YHWH said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. "This," said YHWH, "is so that they may believe that YHWH, the Elohim of their fathers - has appeared to you." Then YHWH said, "Put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous, like snow. "Now put it back into your cloak," he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh. **Then YHWH said, "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign (**אות**), they may believe the second. But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground"*** (Exodus 4:1-9).

Finally even the tenth plague, the slaying of the first born, can be said to follow this pattern. The instructions of YHWH are the sky sign, followed by the observance of His command to put lamb's blood on the doorposts. Then the presence of YHWH comes from the sky—***passing over***—and when He sees the earth sign of the blood which is, the sign of obedience, He spares the household. However, lest the reader feels this trend is confined to just Tanakh, the Renewed Covenant also follows these exact same rules.[125] The most obvious example of course, the Star of Bethlehem, needs little proof to designate as a sky sign!

But the pattern is much deeper than that, as it becomes a key part of Y'shua's own discourses: *[Y'shua said,] "Immediately after the distress of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. **At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.** And he will send his angels with a loud shofar call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other"* (Matthew 24:29-31).

*[Y'shua] said to the crowd: "**When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time?** "Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?"* (Luke 12:54-57)

125 It is important to also stress that the Aramaic Renewed Covenant in the vast majority of cases simply carries over the exact Hebrew word אות into its dialect fully intact as the cognate אתא (*ata*). This is the case, for example, in Matthew 12:38-40, when Y'shua discusses the Sign of Jonah. However, another interesting variant, meaning closer to the "vision" meaning of sign, is in Luke 1:22. There the Aramaic word is *ramaz* (Hebrew, *remez*), which usually means something closer to "hint" or "clue of insight."

Finally, there is also a pecking order in heaven with respect to sky signs themselves. Put simply, ***sun signs rule over moon signs.*** Notice the use of the Hebrew word *gadol* (גדול) to describe the sun as the "greater" light. This word does not refer exclusively to the level of light that the sun produces when compared to the moon, for a simple reason: YHWH knows the moon does not produce any light on its own to begin with! It simply reflects light from the sun. In that sense, the image we are presented with is the sun entrusting the moon with its light.

Another proof of this is according to how the word *gadol* is used elsewhere. Reason being, while there are some verses where the extent of something's light magnitude is meant, very often the sense of authority is also given to the stronger entity over the weaker. For example, the High Priest is called *kohen ha gadol*, and there is little doubt that the high priest's power as a master over the other priests and Levites—as opposed to the extent of his "luminosity" - is the intended meaning. In the same way the "greater light" gives permission for the moon to rise and take its light.

In addition, Scripture demonstrates this same idea: *"This is what YHWH says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?"* (Isaiah 66:1) Which is more likely to have royal power – the throne (heaven) or the Earth (footstool)?

Jeremiah then adds an interesting twist, linking the heavenly covenant with the earthly: *"For this is what YHWH says: 'David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, nor will the priests, who are Levites, ever fail to have a man to stand before me continually to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to present sacrifices.'" The word of YHWH came to Jeremiah:* ***"This is what YHWH says: 'If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night no longer come at their appointed time, then my covenant with David my servant - and my covenant with the Levites who are priests ministering before me - his throne.*** *I will make the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who minister before me as countless as the stars of the sky and as measureless as the sand on the seashore*[126]*'" The word of YHWH came to Jeremiah: "Have you not noticed that these people are saying, ' YHWH has rejected the two kingdoms he chose'? So they despise my people and no longer regard them as a nation. This is what YHWH says****: 'If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed laws of heaven and earth, then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his sons to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*** *For I will restore their fortunes and have compassion on them'"* (Jeremiah 33:17-26).

The final Scriptural validation comes from Ecclesiastes where the *power of judgment resides under the sun* with YHWH, of course, as the ultimate authority: *"And I saw something else under the sun: In the place of judgment - wickedness was there, in the place of justice - wickedness was there. I thought in my heart, "Elohim will bring to judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time for every deed"* (Ecclesiastes 3:16-17).[127]

And Philo adds this insight on the same idea: He (YHWH) has assigned to Him a complete number, as the sun is ordained to be the chief of the stars of heaven. (Philo Judaeus, Questions and Answers on Genesis, 84-b (p. 808 CD Yonge Translation) And so, this representative sample should hopefully suffice for the first major definition in our study. Now let's move on to unlocking the rest of Genesis 1:14-19.

Seasons

While I am deferring the identity of the sky sign that kicks off the calendrical year,[128] the Scripture does tell us the seasons do not begin prior to this phenomenon making its appearance. In Hebrew

126 Notice here that both symbols refer to approximately the same number, but the heavenly image again comes before the earthly one.

127 Also see Revelation 12:1-6, where the sign of a pregnant woman has the sun at her head and the moon at her feet, indicating the sun in a superior position.

128 Hint: it is not the vernal equinox.

then, the next word that we need to look at is *moed* (מועד) which, as indicated earlier, also means "appointed times".

The first season of year is of course, Spring, called *Aviv* in Scripture. The characteristics of Spring involve the earth returning to a state of greenness, which is why we are told in Exodus to observe that moment of the year as its beginning. The Karaites also believe, quite correctly, that the sign of Spring is the tender and green ears of the barley, the first of the produce to ripen in Israel. However, they are incorrect that Aviv has started when the barley ripens, at the end of the lunar year. Barley is the earth sign, but it needs the sky sign to precede it before the season can officially begin.

It is important to point out that the first two commands to "observe Aviv" don't take place in Israel. The first Aviv occurred in Egypt and the second was in the Wilderness. Such a pattern begs several questions of the Karaite position. Which barley "counts" since it ripens gradually over several weeks? Is one part of Israel superior to others? What about the places where the command was originally given, that were both outside of Israel? Where is the biblical procedure that tells us where we get the barley? Who does it and who judges?

There are, of course, basic answers to these questions. However, this is assumed by the Karaites who add their own details to Torah, even while criticizing the Rabbis for the very same thing! However, if we know there is a sky sign that will always point to when the barley is ripe, and this is in harmony with the Torah in places like Genesis 1:14-19, then no additional procedures are required. We simply wait for the sky sign, get the barley, and go!

What we can also say about the *moedim* is that once the time is set, the moon controls the ordering of the sacred festivals: *"The moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down."* (Psalm 104:19) Philo has a very interesting commentary on this verse: And before now some men have predicted disturbances and commotions from the motions of the earth, from the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and innumerable other events that have turned out most exactly true; so that it is a most veracious saying that "the stars were created to act as signs and moreover to mark the seasons." And by the word "seasons" the divisions of the year are intended. And why may not this be reasonably affirmed? For what other idea of opportunity can there be except that it is the time for success? And the seasons bring everything to perfection, and set everything right; giving perfection to the sowing and planting of fruits and to the birth and growth of animals. ***They were also created to serve as the measure of time; for it is by the appointed periodic revolutions of the sun and moon and other stars that the days, months and years are determined.*** (Philo Judaeus, On Creation, 59-60 p. 9 CD Yonge Translation)

However, the moon is still subject to the solar year, because without it these same holidays that are keyed to harvest and planting will occur out of season. So as long as those appointed times stay on track, the moon is in charge. When it needs help, however, to keep the festivals at their proper time, the sun takes over. In so doing, both the sun and the moon mark the year, again as Scripture says.

Days

Once the sun hands control of time over to the moon in pointing to when Spring begins, the sacred days are marked from the beginning of the Synodic Cycle,[129] or in biblical terms, from New Moon to New Moon. However, this reckoning is only valid from Moses' day on, because prior to that time YHWH did not institute festivals that were timed in this manner. We will investigate shortly how days were reckoned in the pre-Mosaic calendar.

129 Synodic is the scientific term for marking the lunar month from one New Moon crescent to another, or 29.53 days. Other methods of marking a lunation can be shorter by as much as two days. Biblical data, though, clearly only recognizes this method of measurement.

Years

And so, by the time we end up actually looking at years, little else need be said. The days, of course, eventually run out, but the Shabbat count is constant even when the next seventh day runs into the following year.

The year also waits for the return of the signs before it officially "dies". That means that sun, moon and earth signs must all agree that the time is right, but we can also calculate the proper interval, regardless as to the calendar to which we are referring.

Calculation vs. Sighted: Who is right?

The final piece of general evidence has to do with the whole calculated/sighted controversy. The Karaites insist that the New Moon crescent is to be observed by reliable witnesses, or the month cannot begin. To be totally fair, though, this is also the claim of many Rabbinics, as well.

In looking at the Talmud we find multiple references to the Sanhedrin, hearing from reliable witnesses that the crescent had been sighted. In return, the Sanhedrin would then give these men a fine meal and lodging for their troubles. Then they would light the lamps that were to signal Israel that the beginning of the month had happened. However, some of the problems of this story are even mentioned in the same source, in that enemies of Israel would also light fires to confuse the rest of the nation![130]

Therefore, there had to be a way to silence all controversy in this matter, if for no other reason than national security literally depended on it. And so there are a few ways of approaching this:

- The procedure of hearing from witnesses of the New Moon sighting was a community awareness service that is not necessarily enshrined in Scripture. There are no such Biblical examples of such process. Nor is there a single reference in Tanakh to sighting the New Moon, but only about what to do when the New Moon occurs.
- The purpose of this procedure was to reassure the people that they did not have to worry about enemy deception. If they did not go up to tell the Sanhedrin about the new month, they could have confidence that one of their fellow countrymen would.
- If the witnesses did not agree or if none came forward, however, there had to be a final judge that gave a clear decision in a timely manner and this was the calculated lunar month that we will examine later. For now, though, the main thing to understand is that since the New Moon to New Moon cycle is always and precisely 29.53 days[131], the lunar months in a given year will always and precisely alternate between 29 and 30 days, without exception.

130 Here is how Alfred Edersheim describes this procedure in *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*, Chapter 10, emphases mine: And this brings up yet another difficulty. The Jews calculated the month according to the phases of the moon, each month consisting of either twenty-nine or thirty days, and beginning with the appearance of the new moon. But this opened a fresh field of uncertainty. ***It is quite true that every one might observe for himself the appearance of a new moon. But this would again partly depend on the state of the weather. Besides, it left an authoritative declaration of the commencement of a month unsupplied. And yet not only was the first of every month to be observed as 'New Moon's Day,' but the feasts took place on the 10th, 15th, or other day of the month, which could not be accurately determined without a certain knowledge of its beginning. To supply this want the Sanhedrim sat in the 'Hall of Polished Stones' to receive the testimony of credible witnesses that they had seen the new moon. To encourage as many as possible to come forward on so important a testimony, these witnesses were handsomely entertained at the public expense.*** If the new moon had appeared at the commencement of the 30th day--which would correspond to our evening of the 29th, as the Jews reckoned the day from evening to evening--the Sanhedrim declared the previous month to have been one of twenty-nine days, or 'imperfect.' Immediately thereon men were sent to a signal-station on the Mount of Olives, where beacon-fires were lit and torches waved, till a kindling flame on a hill in the distance indicated that the signal had been perceived. Thus the tidings, that this was the new moon, would be carried from hill to hill, far beyond the boundaries of Palestine, to those of the dispersion, 'beyond the river.' Again, if credible witnesses had not appeared to testify to the appearance of the new moon on the evening of the 29th, the next evening, or that of the 30th, according to our reckoning, was taken as the commencement of the new month, in which case the previous month was declared to have been one of thirty days, or 'full.' It was ruled that a year should neither have less than four nor more than eight such full months of thirty days. Adding to his last point, the ruling Edersheim mentions with a year never having less than four or more than eight 30-day months also seems to me as part of the same community awareness exercise. Obviously, the median would still be six months at 30 days and six at 29, still adding up to 354 lunar days.

131 Or, to be more precise: 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, 2.8 seconds.

In dovetailing with the last point, it should also be understood that the two ideas of sighting versus calculation are not necessarily mutually exclusive. First of all, the lunar calculation is clearly based on many centuries of careful sightings at every stage of a lunar month. This is, as I mentioned earlier, the essence of the meaning of *shomer*, referring to taking into account the supply of a given item, whether it be with regards to monetary wealth or days. Here are just a few examples of this meaning of *shomer* clearly being intended in Scripture[132]:

> *"You shall not **add** to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may **keep** (שמר) the commandments of YHWH your Elohim which I command you"* (Deuteronomy 4:2).

> *"And as the king passed by, he cried to the king and said, 'Your servant went out into the midst of the battle; and behold, a man turned aside and brought a man to me and said, '**Guard** (שמר) this man; if for any reason he is missing, then your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver'"* (1 Kings 20:39).

> *"And when the priests came forth from the holy place for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without **regard** (שמר) to divisions"*[133] (2 Chronicles 5:11).

The sighting of the New Moon and the calculated time of it were most always exactly the same. However, Scripture also gives us a backup plan should observing the New Moon fail and the people question the calculation:

> *"Blow the shofar at the time of the New Moon. At the full moon, on our solemn feast day"* (Psalm 81:3).

This verse not only marks the "feast day" as the fourteenth day of the month as other verses do, but also as the time of the full moon. That means that if for some reason the New Moon was not proclaimed on time (which likely never happened) the full moon would re-synchronize the time theoretically. The full moon can only occur on the 14th, 15th and 16th days of the month, and the New Moon only happens on the 1st and 2nd days, giving one day leeway if needed. Therefore, if weather intervened (Job 26:9) against seeing the crescent, the proper observation of the beginning or middle of the month would act as a counterbalancing mechanism, and the counting method would keep everything on time.

But even more fundamentally, we know from proven scientific experimentation that there can also be a gap of up to 24 hours between the actual time of the New Moon and the potential sighting of the crescent as "proof", even if the weather did not inhibit a potential sighting. That means that observation alone of the crescent is unreliable, and Scripture never says to guess when the New Moon is, but to have 100% certainty.

Finally, Scripture only comments on the matter when the calendar is calculated as opposed to sighted. Here is the first of two examples:

> *"Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you want me to do, I'll do for you." So **David said, "Look, tomorrow is the New Moon festival, and I am supposed to dine with the king; but let me go and hide in the field until the evening of the day after tomorrow**... Then Jonathan said to David: **"Tomorrow is the New Moon festival. You will be missed, because your seat will be empty.** The day after tomorrow, toward evening, go to the place where you hid when this trouble began, and wait by the stone Ezel…**So David hid in the field, and when the New Moon festival came, the king sat down to eat**"*
> (1 Samuel 20:4-5, 18-19, 24).

132 In fact, in the vast majority of places where שמר appears, it is with respect to YHWH's commandments being carried out. That being the case "observing" a mitzvah has nothing to do with visually seeing that commandment itself!

133 And notice here that since the priests would be dressed the same way, with nothing to visually distinguish one division from another, there is nothing to "observe" in the visual sense.

David and Jonathan knew with absolute certainty that the New Moon is the following day. They were not waiting for it to be sighted by witnesses or to have it validated by a court process. Instead, David and Jonathan knew their calculations were accurate. They also knew that the king's court would rely on the same information they had, which could only have been counting the Synodic cycles of the moon – exactly the sense of *shomer* that we have been talking about.

Let's examine one more example:

> *"Make a roof for it and finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month--on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according to its kind and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings. Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark. The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as Elohim had commanded Noah. Then YHWH shut him in…The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days…The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat"* (Genesis 6:16; 7:11-16, 24; 8:3-4).

So we see that Noah's situation is as follows:

- There is one door to the ark, from which place YHWH shuts him in along with his family and the animals[134]
- The rain for a full forty days and forty nights is clearly sufficient to both flood the Earth and block the sun and the moon (Job 26:9)
- And yet, in spite of definite impediments to sighting the sun and the moon, Noah, or possibly his chronicler Moses, are certain that the time from the start of the deluge to the ark resting on the mountains of Ararat is exactly 150 days

So it appears that either Noah or Moses is counting the exact intervals of days independent of what can be sighted in the sky. As mentioned earlier, the Scriptural command of "observing" in no way demands a visual (or at least not a visual only) system for determining the start of time intervals. In fact, the biblical trending is in the opposite direction. As mentioned earlier, the Shabbat is clearly an absolute count independent of months and years. Furthermore, there can be little doubt that all the feasts and the omer count also run by directly counting the days.

With this general background then, we can now proceed to the specifics of the calendars, beginning with the example we just finished discussing.

The First Calendar: Noah's Solar Year

As we investigate Noah's calendar further, we come to a startling fact: ***There is no way that we can have exactly 5 consecutive months equal 150 days in a lunar system. Therefore, this calendar has to be solar!*** The lunar calendar has to have months alternating between 29 and 30 days in order to stay accurate, but in this case we have the months as 30 days five times in a row!

134 In some translations (KJV) the word *tzohar* is translated as "window"; however, the better rendering is "roof". Even if there was a window it is very doubtful that the weather conditions would have allowed an accurate sighting of the sun and the moon. Whatever the origin of the word, there is still great uncertainty since everywhere else it appears the meaning is exclusively "noon-day". However, the explanation least likely to create error seems to be that "roof" avoids the metaphoric use of this word from not being stretched further than necessary. We can certainly see how "roof" more easily relates to the sky than a window does.

Within a lunar system, the second month must be 29 days. That means that only 12 days remain from when Noah was shut in. Then, again because sighting the sun and moon is not possible here, the calculated lunar calendar demands the third month be 30 days, the fourth 29, the fifth 30, the sixth 29, and then 17 days for the seventh month. The total then comes to only 147 days.

If we assume that the New Moon was sighted in the second month, then the 14th day may have revealed the "double check" (full moon) to establish in advance that it was a 30 day month. Then the rains persist, making sighting the sun and moon impossible for at least 40 days, so the third month must be calculated then.

From there, we have to consider whether the ark had a "window" on top. As mentioned in the previous footnote, the word in question appears 24 times in Tanakh, and 23 of those times it means "noon" or "noon-day". There is absolutely no support for it meaning "window," and almost all scholars believe it refers to the "roof" since the ark is mimicking the pattern of the sky. Nevertheless, if Noah could see out his window starting as early as month 4, then the lunar cycle from there would still alternate between 29 and 30 days. So, if the second month was then somehow 30 days (13 days remaining after the start of the flood), the 3rd month would be 29, fourth month 30, fifth month 29, sixth month 30, plus 17 days in the final month. However, once again, the total is shy of 150 days, this time only at 148 days. In short, this reckoning does not work within a lunar system, even when part of the time it can be sighted. Instead, the only way it works at all is this way:

17th day, 2nd month to the end of that month	13
All of the 3rd month	30
All of the 4th month	30
All of the 5th month	30
All of the 6th month	30
To the 17th day of the 7th month	17
Total Days	150

However, some will point out that perhaps Noah's observation of the crescent of the New Moon was off by a day on two in some of the five months, which might bring it to 150 days while staying lunar. To those who would be of this school I would say this: Yes, that would be possible if, and only if, this were the only biblical example of this original solar year. But, as we will see now, this is not true. In Daniel 7, we are given the first vision of the Beast who will make war against the righteous in the Last Days: *"'The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws.* ***The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.*** *But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.' This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself"* (Daniel 7:24-28).

Even in conventional Judaism, this is understood generally to mean a period of 3 ½ years (a time, two times, plus half). However, Revelation also provides more assistance in clearly explaining the matter: *"The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert,* ***where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach"*** (Revelation 12:14).

*"Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told: "Rise and measure the Temple of Elohim and the altar and those who worship there, but do not measure the court outside the Temple; leave that out****, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the Set Apart city for forty-two months.*** *And I will grant My two witnesses power to prophesy* ***for one thousand two hundred and sixty days****, clothed in sackcloth"* (Revelation 11:2, 3).

*"The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for **forty-two months**."* (Revelation 13:5) So we see here clearly that "time, times and half a time" equals 1,260 days which, in turn, equals 42 months. Therefore:

30 days per month x 42 = 1,260
360 (time) + 720 (times) + 180 (half a time) = 1,260

We even find confirmation from First Century priestly sources that this was the proper understanding: And moreover, it is owing to them (the sun, moon and stars[135]) that the most useful of all things, the nature of number exists, time having displayed it…***and from the notion of a month is derived the number thirty, and from a year that number which is equal to the days of the twelve months***, and from infinite time comes the notion of infinite number. (Philo Judaeus, On Creation, 60 p. 9 CD Yonge Translation)

And in another key passage, Philo goes even further, linking the solar year directly to the most ancient biblical people: Why would a man [Enoch] who lives a life of repentance be said to have lived 365 years?[136] (Genesis 5:23). In the first place, the year consists of 365 days; therefore, by the symbol of the solar orbit, the sacred historian indicates the life of the repentant man. (Philo Judaeus, Questions and Answers on Genesis, 84-a p. 808 CD Yonge Translation)

And from Daniel: ***"From the moment that the perpetual sacrifice is abolished and the disastrous abomination erected: 1,290 days.*** *Blessed is he who stands firm and attains 1,335 days"*[137] (Daniel 12:11-12).

So here we see the same time period mentioned, but this time the 3 ½ year portion equals 1,290 days. The second set of 3 ½ years equals a total of 7 years, or a prophetic week. But, this is also literally true in terms of the calendar as well. The combined message then is this: ***Once every seven years, the divine calendar will add a 30-day solar leap month!*** More specifically, this gets done after the completion of the sixth year, but before the commencement of the seventh, mirroring the Shabbat pattern exactly.

And so, looking at this by the numbers, this is what we have:

(360 x 6) + 30 = 2,190 days
2,190 days divided by 6 = **365 days/year**

Even so, it is fair to point out that the real solar year is 6 hours longer, or 365.25 days. How do we account for that?

First of all we must understand how the 40 year compensation mechanism works. First let's look to Scripture for background: *"I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with*

135 See the previous Philo reference to confirm the context as this is a direct continuation from that passage's last quoted sentence.

136 This is an extremely important reference, as the only man in the Torah recorded as living 365 years is Enoch, the seventh generation from Adam, and these two numbers tell the tale. The seventh generation, like the seventh day, is a symbol of perfection. Added to this we have 365 years in this perfect man's life, who was in fact so righteous that YHWH took him up bodily without having him die. This honor is extremely rare, with the only other Scriptural example being Elijah many centuries later. In any case, the other aspect is that if a day can equal a year (Ezekiel 4:4-6) then a year can equal a day, and that means the perfect man is given a perfect life span, which represents a full solar year. If the "fullness" of the year was intended to be lunar, then Enoch would have lived 354 years. The final *remez*, or hint, is in Enoch's name, which actually is rendered *khanoke* (חנוך) in Hebrew. This word actually means "to dedicate" and it is from this word that we also get *Hanukkah*, which is in turn also known as the Festival of Lights. That linkage not only attaches to Messiah in John 10:22, but also back to the pattern of Creation itself, "Let there be light!"

137 The meaning of the 1,335 days, however, is rooted in the prophecy of Daniel alone. It seems to be referencing the time between the crucifixion of Messiah (30 CE) and the total end to the Jewish War (74 CE). It is this deadly generation that Y'shua keeps referencing; however, I know this is not the only interpretation that has been suggested by other scholars. For now, though, I will simply point out that I am not ignoring the 1,335 days and that its ultimate solution as to what it represents is not needed for the main parts of this discussion.

the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! ***"Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel? You have lifted up the shrine of your king, the pedestal of your idols, the star of your god - which you made for yourselves.*** *Therefore I will send you into exile beyond Damascus," says YHWH, whose name is Elohim Almighty"* (Amos 5:21-27).

So we begin with a *remez* of two different events concerning the same problem of idolatry. In both cases, 40 years of isolation is the chosen penalty. However, there is a **kosher** version where we admired the stars as servants of YHWH, who made them. So now think 40 years and stars, and let's go to the next step: *"But Elohim turned away and gave them over to the worship of the heavenly bodies. This agrees with what is written in the book of the prophets: 'Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel? You have lifted up the shrine of Molech and the* ***star of your god*** *Rephan, the idols you made to worship. Therefore, I will send you into exile beyond Babylon.' Our forefathers had the tabernacle of the Testimony with them in the desert. It had been made as Elohim directed Moses,* ***according to the pattern*** *he had seen. Having received the tabernacle, our fathers under Joshua brought it with them when they took the land from the nations Elohim drove out before them. It remained in the land until the time of David, who enjoyed Elohim's favor and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the Elohim of Jacob. But it was Solomon who built the house for him. However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says:* ***'Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool****. What kind of house will you build for me? says YHWH. Or where will my resting place be? Has not my hand made all these things?'"* (Acts 7:42-50)

Moses saw a pattern in heaven and, of course heaven signs are superior to earth signs but what about the stars then? Here is an interesting mention of one particular star: *"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near.* ***A star will come out of Jacob****; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the sons of Seth"* (Numbers 24:17). Leaving aside the metaphoric/Messianic imagery, the verse literally does identify a star with Jacob, also known as Israel. However, this verse as well as Genesis 1:14-19, tells us that certain stars are somehow marking time!

Next we add to these facts the time both writers are talking about. This is the second year after the Exodus and, therefore, the time the rebellious Israelites spend wandering in the Wilderness until the generation that worshipped the Golden Calf is consumed. Torah clearly says this period is in fact 40 years. Then, after this time, the generation is considered "cleansed" and they are permitted to enter into Promised Land.

Therefore, if the sun can rest for a Shabbat by having the leap month added after six years, it also seems reasonable that the 40 year cycle of the Israelites on Earth is also first reflected in heaven. In other words, this year points to the time that the 40 year cycle also completed in heaven, when it would then reset for the next 40 years.

What that means as far as the calendar we are discussing is that 2,190 day/6 year cycle itself repeats six times, bringing us to 36 years. Then, instead of waiting for another six years before the next solar leap month, we simply complete the generation and do it after four years, making for a 40 year cycle in all! When we do this, then the math changes accordingly:

2,190 days x 6 = 13,140 days in 36 years
(360 days x 4) + 30 = 1,470 days between years 37 through 40
13,140 + 1,470 = 14,610 days in 40 years
14,610 days divided by 40 = **365.25 days/year**

Now at this point, the numbers get more complicated.[138] In order to reach the accuracy of our

138 At this point, I want to also extend a large amount of gratitude to the folks who maintain the excellent website: www.360calendar.com. They have assembled an impressive catalog of data and in order to take the final steps I needed to verify a 100,000 year cycle.

current Gregorian system, it is necessary to omit the leap month in the 100th occurrence of the 40-year cycle, or once every 4,000 years. That slight change will yield a year equaling **365.2425** days. So, if the sun simply follows Torah on Shabbat and generational time, we arrive at the exact same interval predicted with our current Gregorian calendar!

On the other hand, while there is no direct Scriptural reference for cutting the numbers this fine, the general principles of following the sun and moon signs we have discussed up until now surely imply that we should at least be at this level. Remarkably, though, we can even get more accurate. Let us examine the Scripture first: *"You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I YHWH your Elohim am a jealous Elohim, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the* ***thousandth generation*** *of those who love me and keep my commandments"* (Exodus 20:5-6) (See also Deuteronomy 7:9, 1 Chronicles 16:15, Psalm 105:8.) A thousand generations is surely a major piece of time. Further, as Numbers 32:13 and many other Torah passages teach, an individual generation is usually 40 years long.

However, other Torah passages show that a generation can also equal 100 years! Let's see why: *"Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years****; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth;*** *he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed"* (Isaiah 65:20). The reason a person who dies at a hundred years is considered "accursed" is because by the standard of the Messianic Age he would have just barely reached a generation when compared with how long others will live!

But let's also see the earlier reference to this too: *"{Elohim} said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs,* ***where they will be enslaved and oppressed 400 years.*** *But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a good old age.* ***In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here,*** *for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure"* (Genesis 15:13-16).

In Hebrew, we are told that "four *meah* (מאה) of years" passes, and *meah* is the Hebrew number for 100. However, the exact same period of time is also referred to here as "four *dor* (דור), the same word used for 40 year "generations" elsewhere. Therefore a generation can also equal 100 years, and this should be reflected in YHWH's calendar. As I alluded to just now, that manifests in a 100,000 year cycle (1,000 generations in the Scripture times the 100 year per generation reference).

In crunching the numbers then, we come up with a very simple addition that in the last 40 year cycle of the 100,000 year period the 6th and 7th interval solar leap months are omitted. That will then bring us to an even more accurate calendar than the one we currently use, with a year now equaling **365.2422** days, the exact length of the solar year.

Once more, as mentioned in an earlier footnote, I am indebted to the research of the folks at: www.360calendar.com for some of these finer points. Their research goes into much greater detail, but for our purposes it is sufficient to simply show that biblical numbers reveal the perfect solar year, because it is important that we understand that this has always been tracked in Scripture.[139]

139 Some may object to this system as defined here and with the help of www.360calendar.com. The anticipated objection will likely be that not every bit of detail came directly from Scriptural reference, and I sympathize with this viewpoint. Some may suggest that the maximum we can glean from Scripture would only bring us to Gregorian levels, and that further calculations become speculative. Therefore, I suggest an alternate mechanism. The Gregorian calendar is predicted to lose a day every 3,300 years. While this is a great improvement over the Julian that loses a day every 128 years, it nevertheless is a time frame that is exceeded by the period of years outlined in the Bible, in that Moses lived around 3,500 years ago and Abraham and Noah, of course, go further back than this. To counteract this issue, my suggestion is to take the incidents in Joshua and Isaiah literally with respect to the sun's progress. In Joshua, the sun and the moon stay frozen for almost a day. In Isaiah, the prophet gives a sign to a king by causing the shadows cast by the sun to roll back. If both of these "tweaks" are added together, it turns out YHWH used these miracles to synchronize our solar system clock to the rest of the galaxy, and thus a "day patch" is added, keeping the biblical and Gregorian calendars in perfect alignment, the degree of which I will explain a little later in the main text. For now, suffice it to say that I believe that both solutions are Scriptural as well as perfect, but I fully understand why some would prefer this version over its more detailed numerically based counterpart.

Later we will see how the detailed relationship between the heavens and the Israelites unfold with clear celestial references from Scripture. Now, however, our more pressing need is to look at the other pattern, where the priests set the sacred festivals by the cycles of the moon. After that, we will investigate the ultimate sky sign that kicks off the year in both systems.

The Gregorian Patch

In the next two sections, we will see if the Jubilee Pattern can give insight into the time of Messiah Y'shua's return. Now, however, we need to take a slight diversion to lay down the necessary foundation to that argument. All solar calendars intercalculate in some way, whether it is by leap months or leap days, because the solar year has approximately a six hour remainder after its 365th day that has to be dealt with.

After all the effort put towards the 360 day Prophetic Calendar, we need not now correlate the Priestly Calendar because we eventually come to the same number of days either way at the end of the cycle. There is no reason to convert the Hebrew dates to the 360, and then to Gregorian, when going directly to Gregorian will serve just fine. Besides, without a direct conversion into Gregorian, the dates laid down thus far, will be meaningless.

On the other hand, many calendar experts warn that taking Gregorian too far backwards from its creation in 1582 is a perilous undertaking. If those doing the assessment do not believe in the literal truth of the Bible, then neither are they likely to accept this treatment either.

The fact is, our Gregorian Calendar was meant to correct the long-standing losses of the Julian Calendar, which lost a day every 128 years. Julian was thus corrected going backward by adding 12 days. Then, going forward, Gregorian instituted 97 leap days in a 400 year period, instead of the Julian's 100 leap days in the same time frame. As a result, instead of losing a day every 128 years, the new calendar was accurate to losing a day every 3,300 years!

But immediately we see the problem: Moses' day is more than 3,500 years in the past, so it would seem that Gregorian loses its accuracy when looking at that period in history. Thankfully, however, Scripture does give us an ancient answer to this seemingly scientifically sound obstacle: *"On the day YHWH gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to YHWH in the presence of Israel: "O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon."* ***So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped****, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar.* ***The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day.*** *There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when YHWH listened to a man. Surely YHWH was fighting for Israel!"* (Joshua 10:12-14)

*"Then the word of YHWH came to Isaiah: "Go and tell Hezekiah, 'This is what YHWH, the Elohim of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city. "'This is YHWH's sign to you that YHWH will do what he has promised****: I will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.'" So the sunlight went back the ten steps it had gone down"*** (Isaiah 38:4-8).

If we take these verses literally, then it is beyond dispute that the sun and moon were held still for a combined day - at the very least! Since the sun and the moon are marking the year then, their pausing for a day while the rest of our galaxy keeps moving would have synchronized our solar system to the galaxy - in effect patching Gregorian, so it did not lose that day from 3,300 years in either direction. In practical terms that means any range of dates from about 1718 BCE to 4882 CE can be accurately charted with the Gregorian system without losing a day.[140]

140 This of course, works just fine for Moses' time, which we are studying. For anything prior to the 1718 BCE chronology, such as Abraham, we would simply have to use the 360 solar year calendar already described and then calculate it into Gregorian, or just subtract a Gregorian day which will keep it accurate for 3,300 more years going backwards from 1718 BCE. This extra step, though, is not needed for this time, because once again Moses was alive in 1500 BCE.

Therefore, as we convert the priestly times into Gregorian, there will be no such concern about losing any time. Also, bear in mind that such a situation means that we can now turn to Lunar/Gregorian tables with great accuracy and even determine when a biblical year would have a leap day on February 29th by our reckoning.

Understanding Prophetic and Practical Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

As we saw in the recent quoting of Leviticus 25:8-13, the counts for the Sabbatical and Jubilee years were tied to the entry into Canaan, not the Exodus that happened 40 years earlier. However, YHWH did not intend for there to be a 40 year delay; the delay was caused by the Israelites worshipping the Golden Calf. And, even as Israel was still wandering, YHWH then gave this warning as a reminder for what will happen after they get to the Promised Land: *"'**Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled**. Even the land was defiled; so I punished it for its sin, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. **But you must keep my decrees and my laws.** The native-born and the aliens living among you must not do any of these detestable things, for all these things were done by the people who lived in the land before you, and the land became defiled. **And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you"*** (Leviticus 18:24-28).

However, when almost 90 percent of the nation was taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 BCE, it seems a question arose amongst the remaining leadership: Do we keep the Sabbatical and Jubilee years when most of our nation is scattered? As history shows, their answer appeared to be no, and the lack of observance of these times may have extended even further back, dovetailing with the fact that not even Passover was observed until centuries later.

But YHWH had other ideas, and tried to tell them so: *"Then the land will enjoy its Sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its Sabbaths"* (Leviticus 26:34).

When they still did not listen, the prophecy became true: *"**Furthermore, all the leaders of the priests and the people became more and more unfaithful, following all the detestable practices of the nations and defiling the temple of YHWH, which he had consecrated in Jerusalem**. YHWH, the Elohim of their fathers, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. **But they mocked Elohim's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of YHWH was aroused against his people and there was no remedy**. He brought up against them the king of the Babylonians, who killed their young men with the sword in the sanctuary, and spared neither young man nor young woman, old man or aged. Elohim handed all of them over to Nebuchadnezzar. He carried to Babylon all the articles from the temple of Elohim, both large and small, and the treasures of YHWH's temple and the treasures of the king and his officials. They set fire to Elohim's temple and broke down the wall of Jerusalem; they burned all the palaces and destroyed everything of value there. He carried into exile to Babylon the remnant, who escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. **The land enjoyed its Sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of YHWH spoken by Jeremiah**"* (2 Chronicles 36:14-21).

So we see, then, that YHWH intended Israel to forever vouchsafe her presence in the Land through continuously righteous behavior. But, when after rebellion they were expelled, the Land took its Sabbaths anyway. Since the Jubilee is also based at least partly on the seven-year Sabbaths, it should not be surprising that there is a difference between the idealized Jubilee system YHWH instituted that knew no breaks and the "practical" system that came about when rabbis began counting those same occasions from the time they returned to the Land.

It is for these reasons that the rabbinical Jubilee and Sabbatical year counting became flawed and at odds with the dates given to us by Torah. It seems that whatever the number of Jews that

YHWH required to be in the Land to keep the Jubilees going was always much smaller than what the religious elite believed. It can also be shown that there was always a Jewish presence in the Land even during the Diaspora, meaning that from YHWH's perspective that Jubilee Clock, once started in 1406 BCE, should never have stopped in the first place.

By contrast, none of the possible years of the First Temple's destruction fit as years after the Sabbatical. This is even true of the false but popular rabbinic choice of 432 BCE, as well as the 588-586 BCE timeframe.

Why the Jewish leadership, including today's rabbinate and Sanhedrin, always seems to ignore this command is difficult to tell, however, the bad practice still continues. When Israel was re-born in 1948, the leading rabbis chose 1951 as the first Jubilee since the majority of Jewry returned to the Land. However, if we make 1951 a continuous backwards cycle we see that not even the well established 70 CE date for the Second Temple's destruction works with the timing the Mishnah specifies for the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles! In that event, the nearest Jubilee would have been 40 CE, meaning the year the Mishnah identifies, 69, could not have been Sabbatical. And so, where that leaves us is simply to say that what follows has to do with the Perfect Prophetic Sabbatical/Jubilee Cycle, along with the five year cycle explained earlier. That continuous cycle then cannot and does not resemble the traditional Mishnah speculations, which are based on when they were in and out of the Land.

That idea, then, leads to this final point on this subject: "*Therefore wait for me, declares YHWH, for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them - all my fierce anger.* ***The whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealous anger. Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of YHWH and serve him shoulder to shoulder.*** *From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshipers, my scattered people, will bring me offerings. On that day you will not be put to shame for all the wrongs you have done to me, because I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride. Never again will you be haughty on my holy hill. But I will leave within you the meek and humble, who trust in the name of YHWH.* ***The remnant of Israel will do no wrong; they will speak no lies, nor will deceit be found in their mouths. They will eat and lie down and no one will make them afraid***" (Zephaniah 3:8-13).

So, in the end times, proper knowledge will be restored to Yisrael so that they may serve YHWH perfectly again.

Jubilee of Jubilees! Can We Name the Time of Mashiyach's Return?

Perhaps the most surprising discovery is in seeing how the Jubilee Pattern may point, at least in a general sense, to the Second Coming of Messiah Y'shua. Before explaining further, though, let us remember that Y'shua said that only Father YHWH knows for sure when this will happen,[141] and that we will not know the hour. However, YHWH also gave us clues that clearly point to the overall time, and almost all Jewish and Christian scholars agree the clock started ticking in 1948, when Israel became a state.

There have been numerous Christian prophetic debacles in history when folks like William Miller[142] misinterpreted Scripture and followed their own human reasoning. However, even he recovered from that disaster and went on to other things to benefit people today. If that's the worst that can happen, it is better to risk than to remain silent on the most amazing Scriptural pattern that I have ever seen. The details of this Jubilee clock are complex and fully explained in the publication Wheel of Stars by Andrew Gabriel Roth. However, for now, these are the basics.

141 See Matthew 24:35-36 and Acts 1:7.

142 William Miller was a Protestant minister who predicted the world would end in 1843 and then 1844. When neither apocalypse happened it led to what is now known as "The Great Disappointment". However, he recovered his reputation somewhat and at least two mainline Protestant offshoots, including the Seventh Day Adventists, trace their origins back to him.

The time clock begins in the year of the Exodus itself, 480 years before the 4th year of Solomon (1 Kings 6:1). In that year the Israelites worshipped the Golden Calf and received 40 years in Wilderness as a penalty. Further adjustment, for the spring to spring reckoning instituted by YHWH in Exodus 12:1-2, will bring us to the spring of 1406 BCE for the start of the year count, and therefore 1356 is Jubilee 1. The full list of the BCE Jubilees is as follows:

BCE 1) 1356, 2) 1306, 3) 1256, 4) 1206, 5) 1156, 6) 1106, 7) 1056, 8) 1006, 9) 956, 10) 906, 11) 856, 12) 806, 13) 756, 14) 706, 15) 656, 16) 606, 17) 556, 18) 506, 19) 456, 20) 406, 21) 356, 22) 306, 23) 256, 24) 206, 25) 156, 26) 106, 27) 56, **28) 06—6 BCE.**

Then, adjusting for crossing the BCE-CE timeline, we have these Jubilee years:

CE 29) 45, 30) 95, 31) 145, 32) 195, 33) 245, 34) 295, 35) 345, 36) 395, 37) 445, 38) 495, 39) 545, 40) 595, 41) 645, 42) 695, 43) 745, 44) 795, 45) 845, 46) 895, 47) 945, 48) 995, 49) 1045, 50) 1095, 51) 1145, 52) 1295, 53) 1345, 54) 1395, 55) 1445, 56) 1495, 57) 1545, 58) 1595, 59) 1645, 60) 1695, 61) 1745, 62) 1795, 63) 1845, 64) 1895, 65) 1945, **66) 1995**, 67) 2045, 68) 2095, 69) 2145, 70) 2195

As shown above, we would have entered into the 66th Jubilee cycle in 1995, and also by this "straight count" method we would enter into the 70th Jubilee in 2195 and end that cycle in 2245, which would mark the expiry of 70th cycle of Y'shua's return.

However, if we look at places where the rules of the Jubilee were applied before the Israelites entered Canaan, we find four occasions where people were removed off their land due to disobedience: Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise, the Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the expulsion of the Canaanites whose example was used to warn Israel that they would face the same fate if they disobeyed YHWH. In the book version of Wheel of Stars, we explore much scientific and mathematical evidence to resolve which model is more probable. For now it is important to note that if the early model is correct Y'shua could very well return in our lifetimes.

The Final Sky Sign: What Really Set the Year?

Throughout this study the Vernal Equinox has been referenced as the presumptive time for starting the year. However, while the Vernal and Autumnal Equinoxes are a key clue to help set the general seasonal time, they are not the overall sky sign that kicks the year off. There are two main components to understanding this fact. The first is showing how a kosher version of the Zodiac was used by ancient Israel to track the solar year. The second is explaining what that ultimate "year sign" really is, and what it is not.

As stated earlier, both Josephus and Philo descend from families of priests[143]; they were eyewitnesses to the intricacies of Temple practice[144] and were very well educated men who had access to oral and written traditions that have since been otherwise lost. Again, though, as long as general agreement can be maintained between these men and through Torah teaching and practice, this methodology is most likely the closest we can come back to those original sources.

We just witnessed how Josephus used the Zodiac to explain the precise time of the Ten Plagues and the Exodus. Now let us see how both Josephus and Philo describe how their ancestors regarded the Equinoxes,[145] sun, moon and stars for the timing of festivals:

143 Josephus also attests to being descended from the Hasmonean royal line, giving him even greater access and understanding of this now lost material. For more information, see his brief autobiography "Life" as recorded in the William Whiston translation, published most recently by Hendrickson Press.

144 Although we only know of one trip to Jerusalem undertaken by Philo, there has never been any proof that he never went up before or since that particular occasion. At a minimum, Philo has access to priestly documentation that has been lost since the destruction of the Temple, and it is a pretty safe bet that Josephus is reading from those same sources, given how the two men agree so closely on the contents of this extra material.

145 In addition, of course, to the Aries-Passover connection Josephus provided us in Antiquities 3.10.5.

The last of all the annual festivals is that which is called the Feast of Tabernacles, which is fixed for the season of the autumnal equinox. (Philo Judaeus, Special Laws, II, 204 p. 587 CD Yonge Translation)

On the fourth day he (YHWH) adorned the heaven with the sun, the moon, and the other stars, and appointed them their motions and courses, that the vicissitudes of the seasons might be clearly signified. (Josephus, Preface to Antiquities, 1.1.1)

Upon the fifteenth day of the same month, ***when the season of the year is changing for winter, the Torah enjoins us to pitch Tabernacles in every one of our houses, so that we preserve ourselves from the cold of that time of the year***; as also that when we should arrive at our own country, and come to that city which we should have then for our metropolis, because of the temple therein to be built, and keep a festival for eight days…(Josephus, Antiquities, 3.10.4)

Going a step further then, both Josephus and Philo show us how the priests were tracking the solar year and Zodiac cycle, right down to the memories enshrined in their garments: But in the void place of this garment there was inserted a piece of the bigness of a span, embroidered with gold, and the other colors of the ephod, and was called Essen...On these were engraved the names of the sons of Jacob, in our own country letters, and in our own tongue, six on each of the stones, on either side; and the elder sons' names were on the right shoulder. Twelve stones also there were upon the breast-plate, extraordinary in largeness and beauty...Now the names of all those sons of Jacob were engraved in these stones, whom we esteem the heads of our tribes, each stone having the honor of a name, in the order according to which they were born...***And for the twelve stones, whether we understand by them the months, or whether we understand them like number of the signs of that circle which the Greeks call the Zodiac, we shall not be mistaken in their meaning.*** (Josephus, Antiquities, 3.7.5, 3.7.7)

Then on (the high priest's) chest there are twelve precious stones of different colors, arranged in four rows of three stones in each row, being fashioned so as an emblem of the zodiac. For the zodiac also consists of twelve animals, and so divides the four seasons of the year, allotting three animals to each season. (Philo Judaeus, Special Laws, I, 84-87 (p. 542 CD Yonge Translation)

In both cases, the linkage to the Zodiac specifically designates a solar year. It is in fact the most accurate measure of a solar year that was available to the ancients. Only the measuring of the year from the center of our galaxy, which was not in use prior to the 20th Century, is more accurate. However, we must separate fable from fact with respect to the Zodiac as an astronomical system. Here is some additional background from Wikipedia an online encyclopedia, with the emphases being mine: For any spherical celestial coordinate system one needs to define an equatorial plane and designate an origin for longitude. From these definitions longitudinal meridians perpendicular to the equatorial plane meet at the north and south poles of the celestial sphere and one can precisely specify a unique position on the sphere.

First, the zodiac coordinate system designates the ecliptic as the equatorial plane. One should not confuse the zodiac's equatorial plane with the Earth's equator which is so named because it serves as the equatorial plane for our terrestrial coordinate system. Instead the ecliptic is aligned with the Earth's orbital plane with the Sun. The Earth tilts at an angle of approximately 23° with respect to the orbital plane. This tilt is partly due to the Earth's precession as it gyrates and rotates on its axis. It contributes to the divergence between a tropical year and a sidereal year and thus contributes to the precession of the equinoxes which marks the difference between tropical and sidereal celestial coordinate systems.

Second, ***a system of coordinates must normally specify an origin (0° point) for longitude. However, the zodiac system names twelve equal regions (called signs) and technically any sign can serve as the beginning or the end of the sphere's precession. The system further divides***

each sign into thirty degree units. One reason this system of coordinates was particularly useful in antiquity is that writing large numbers was difficult before the introduction of Arabic numbers. The zodiac system of coordinates kept every number below ninety (the highest value for zodiac latitudes). Since the constellations along the ecliptic varied in size, defining 12 equal signs of 30° each did require an arbitrary assignment of boundaries roughly corresponding to the ecliptic constellations.

It is believed many of the classical astronomers specified zodiac signs using two bright stars near the ecliptic and opposite each other to serve as equatorial nodes or poles (not longitudinal poles): ***Aldebaran*** and ***Antares*** in the constellations ***Taurus*** and ***Scorpius*** respectively. These stars served rather well because not only were they on opposites sides of the ecliptic, but they also fell very near the center of their constellations and were therefore designated as Taurus 15 and Scorpius 15, meaning the middle 15° points within those signs. From these two stars then the remaining equatorial boundaries of the 12 signs of the zodiac follow).[146]

These ideas, then, bring us back to the reading in Job that was referenced at the beginning: "Can you bind the beautiful Pleiades? Can you loose the cords of Orion? Can you bring forth the Wheel of Stars into its seasons and stand in the path of Ayish/Iyutha (Aldeberan) and her satellites (Hyades). Do you know the laws of the heavens and can you establish their rule over the earth?... Have you given wisdom to the Lance Star (Antares) or intelligence to the Bow Star?" (Hebrew & Aramaic Job 38:31-33, 38, cross referenced to the translation of T.K. Cheyne: Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1898), pp. 103-107)

Again, according to Brown Drivers Briggs, the word *mazzaroth* means "the twelve signs of the Zodiac and their thirty-six associated constellations." If this is what is being brought into season by YHWH, then it is extremely powerful proof that the Tanakh itself is harking back to the solar and celestial synchronization that keeps the lunar-based holidays in season.

What's more, the other stars mentioned in this passage of Job according to the Aramaic traditions of both the Tanakh and the 4th Century Syrian Saint Mar Ephraim, are clearly the two points that determine the line that makes the Zodiac itself!

This phenomenon of the sun at zero degrees between Antares and Aldeberan is different from the Vernal Equinox because it is annual, not semi-annual. Also, this event clearly coincides with Josephus' description of the sign of Aries in the time of Moses! And so, the return of the sun to this region of sky only happens on Vernal Equinox day.

Finally, all of this data again harmonizes with Tanakh in terms of its definition that an annual event is also required to set the year: "Afterward, the prophet came to the king of Israel and said, 'Strengthen your position and see what must be done***, because next spring/turn of the year the king of Aram will attack you again'"*** (1 Kings 20:22). The literal reading in Hebrew is *b'teshuwbah hayah shaneh* - or referring to the time after the year was expired, or in the Spring of the year, depending on translation.

We can see this concept more clearly in the Strong's entry for *teshuwbah*: 8666. teshuwbah, tesh-oo-baw'; or teshubah, tesh-oo-baw'; from 7725; a recurrence (of time or place); a reply (as returned):--answer, be expired, return. The same word is used four other times in reference to the Spring as the *"turn of the year"* (2 Samuel 11:1; 1 Kings 20:26; 1 Chronicles 20:1; 2 Chronicles 36:10)

The other Hebrew word used to describe the same idea is *tequwphot*: *"And you shall observe the feast of weeks, of the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the* ***year's end*** *(tequwphot)"* (Exodus 34:22).

"The heavens declare the glory of Elohim; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after

146 Also see, Powell, Robert (2004). The Definition of the Babylonian Zodiac: (online at: www.astrologer.com/ aanet/ pub/ transit/ jan2005/ babylonian.htm) PhD thesis entitled "The Definition of the Babylonian Zodiac and the Influence of Babylonian Astronomy on the Subsequent Defining of the Zodiac."

day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. ***It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its return circle/circuit*** *(tequwphot)* ***to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat****"* (Psalm 19:1-6).

"Now it came about at the ***turn of the year*** *(tequwphot)*[147] *that the army of the Arameans came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, destroyed all the officials of the people from among the people, and sent all their spoil to the king of Damascus"* (2 Chronicles 24:23).

Strong's defines the word officially this way: 8622. *Tequwfaw*. Coming round, circuit of time or space, a turning, circuit. Therefore, Tanakh, Josephus and Philo are all linking Spring to an annual event – the return orbit of the sun to the zero degree marker. While it is true that practical considerations made the Vernal Equinox a far easier mechanism to identify, the technical occasion remained the time when the sun returned to Aries, as viewed by ancient Israel at the time of the Exodus.

Conclusion: Where Do We Go From Here?

An old proverb states that we have to know where we have been in order to know where we are going. Nowhere is this idea truer than with this issue of the biblical calendars. In the quest to understand how the ancients reckoned time, we have been brought through the heart of biblical prophecy, recovered key historical timelines and, perhaps, gained some insight into a range of years that presage the timing of Messiah's return.

We have also seen in general, how the 360 day prophetic calendar gave way to the Pre-Metonic Lunar Regression Calendar, at least in terms of daily usage, so that the harvest festivals could be set by the New Moon. The Pre-Metonic, in its own turn, can also be easily seen giving way to the current Rabbinic Calendar in two respects.

First, the core of Pre-Metonic, that of beginning a cycle with the New Moon, was clearly retained and carried over into the rabbinic system. However, it also seems the rabbis co-opted the solar synchronization idea from the 360 calendar as well, even though its leap months were occurring at different times.

Second, the Pre-Metonic goes a long way to explaining how the general ideas of inter-calculation were present in biblical times, and makes the leap into the Rabbinic more understandable as a smoother transition of ancient ideas well before the understanding of the 19-year cycle arose. The other more enlightening aspect in this regard is that we can see how the rabbis would have viewed their calendrical changes through the prism of being outside of Israel and being able to use that particular area's sky signs and earth signs in combination to synchronize the year. Put simply, it just made more sense to take the lunar year and marry it to a fixed cycle that any Jew could accurately use regardless as to where they lived. This is not to say, however, that all the changes the rabbis subsequently made to their calendar were beneficial or even Scriptural. But, if nothing else, it does make these rulings appear less arbitrary and less divorced from historical process.

What is less clear, however, is how the 360 day calendar relates to our times. Like the Pre-Metonic and Rabbinic systems, the 360 and Gregorian systems seem to resonate and relate to one another historically. But, the fact that the 360 day system is confirmed in the Book of Revelation more than suggests that this timing is not only still being used in heaven by YHWH, but that it will also key mankind into the system that will mark the arrival of the End of Days. How and when the 360 day calendar comes back, though, is not in my power to determine. How the Gregorian may be a kind of witness in this drama also is beyond my understanding.

147 This time the word refers to Spring. In the first verse, however, it was Fall. This word is tracking the agricultural growing season, driven by the solar cycle.

It is safe to say that as we move closer to the End of Days, more of these insights into the timing of prophecy are inevitable: *"At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people - everyone whose name is found written in the book - will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.* ***But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge****"* (Daniel 12:1-4).

"Be stunned and amazed, blind yourselves and be sightless; be drunk, but not from wine, stagger, but not from beer. ***YHWH has brought over you a deep sleep: He has sealed your eyes (the prophets); he has covered your heads (the seers). For you this whole vision is nothing but words sealed in a scroll. And if you give the scroll to someone who can read, and say to him, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I can't; it is sealed."*** *Or if you give the scroll to someone who cannot read, and say, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I don't know how to read." YHWH says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.* ***Therefore once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder; the wisdom of the wise will perish, the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish****"* (Isaiah 29:9-14).

Y'shua said, all we can do is be vigilant, for we do not know when the day of reckoning comes upon us. If we hold fast though, I pray that YHWH will guide us to all truth and that mankind will see all things in the universe are meant to be for His glory alone.[148]

When was the Crucifixion?

Here is ample Biblical evidence that points to our Savior being crucified on a Thursday, which renders null and void the tradition of "Good Friday" and the Sunday resurrection in Christian lore. Y'shua stated in numerous places (e.g. Matthew 12:38-40) that the Sign of Jonah demanded the Son of Man remain in the earth for three days and three nights. If Y'shua had meant "on the third day," meaning after two days were completed, he most likely would have called it "the Sign of Joseph" because, while Jonah 1:17 tells us the prophet was released from the big fish after three days and three nights; Joseph, according to Genesis 42:17-18, is said to have freed his brothers from prison "on the third day."

This is no small distinction, simply because it is impossible to arrive at a time frame of three and days and three nights with an execution on Friday afternoon and a resurrection at Sunday dawn. Christianity as a whole has confused Annual and Weekly Sabbaths, and in general seems to be unaware of multiple "days of preparation" across the timeline in question.

To discern exactly when our Savior rose, it is important to recognize a few things – beginning with the fact that the dawning of a new day according to YHWH and the Hebrew calendar is at twilight as it is getting dark; not at first light in the morning…We also need to note that the time that Y'shua was placed into the grave, which was just before sunset - or approximately 5 p.m. (March-April timeframe).

No matter what the days are called on our modern calendars, there is no way that three days and three nights beginning sometime in Friday evening can end early on Sunday morning – which is what most Christian scholars are trying to insist. The Bible tells us that Y'shua died at 3 p.m. (the ninth hour – John 19:14 – the day had only 12 "hours" in this era); that he was buried later that day (John 19:31); and that he was in the grave "three days and three nights."

148 Additional notes for Wheel of Stars is available at: www.aent.org/wheelofstars.htm

When is the Passover Lamb Eaten?

This may seem an odd question, but in fact there are two different timelines in the Synoptics and John for when the Paschal lamb is eaten:

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Y'shua and asked, *"Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'" **So the disciples did as Y'shua had directed them and prepared the Passover. When evening came, Y'shua was reclining at the table with the Twelve.** And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Master?" Y'shua replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." Then Yehuda, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Y'shua answered, "Yes, it is you." While they were eating, Y'shua took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom"* (Matthew 26:17-29).

This passage, along with parallel citations in Mark 14:12-31 and Luke 22:1-21, clearly indicate the evening of Y'shua's arrest is just after a Passover Seder. But, on the other hand, John seems to mention a different schedule:

*"When he had finished praying, Y'shua left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it. Now Yehuda, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Y'shua had often met there with his disciples. So Yehuda came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees...**Then the Jews led Y'shua from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover"*** (John 18:1-3, 28).

There seems to be a contradiction between these two accounts. John says the Pharisees have not yet had their Passover even the morning after they arrested Y'shua from his own Seder! Can both accounts be right? As it turns out, the answer is yes, but not for the reasons that most think. Some theologians are split on whether they should keep the first or second night of Pesach (or both) as a Seder. The reason for both this modern tendency and one explanation for why the Pharisees did what they did in Y'shua's day, comes from this a "confusion" of understanding the Tanakh:

*"Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. **In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day.** For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born. Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread"* (Exodus 12:17-20).

These instructions seem straightforward at first glance:

> 1) Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are interchangeable terms for a ceremony that begins on the evening of 14 Nisan. (For confirmation of a 6 day Feast of Unleavened Bread, please see Deuteronomy 16:8)

2) The combined feast lasts seven days, from the 14th to the 21st, during which time yeast is totally prohibited.

However, when we examine other passages in Torah, it's not so easy after all:

> *"These are YHWH's appointed feasts, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times:* ***YHWH's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month YHWH's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast"*** (Leviticus 23:4-6).

> *"On the fourteenth day of the first month YHWH's Passover is to be held. On the fifteenth day of this month there is to be a festival; for seven days eat bread made without yeast"* (Numbers 28:16-17).

Here the scenario is:

1) Passover is a separate occasion, beginning late afternoon on 14 Nisan.
2) Passover is then followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasts an additional seven days.

Additionally: *"On the first day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. For seven days present an offering made to YHWH by fire. And on the seventh day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work."* (Leviticus 23:7-8) The "first day" mentioned here in Leviticus 23:7 is the same "first day mentioned in the line before, 15 Nisan. So now, technically speaking, we have three sacred occasions[149] running together:

1) Passover, just in the twilight time on the 14th. Begin eating unleavened bread, and also bitter herbs, etc., for the Seder.

2) The Feast of Unleavened Bread, from 15-21 Nisan, where unleavened bread is eaten for 6 more days, totaling 7 in all. On the 15th also there is a "sacred assembly" (Annual Shabbat) in which no work is to be done.

3) At the end of the six additional days is separate "sacred assembly" (also an Annual Shabbat) where again regular work is prohibited.

It takes several references to piece everything together, and we can easily see why some references would add the 8th day (the second sacred assembly) to the overall holiday, and others might be more precise and say it is a separated occasion that simply happens the very next day. This "overflowing" from Passover on 14 Nisan, directly into the Feast of Unleavened Bread on 15-21 Nisan and the final Annual Shabbat on 22 Nisan is responsible for much of the controvery on the "Passover" timing!

In Y'shua's time, eating the Paschal lamb sometimes got confused with the burnt offering/meal called a "chagigah" that happened a day later, as Alfred Edersheim explains: We have already explained that according to the Rabbis (*Chag*. ii, 1; vi. 2), three things were implied in the festive command to 'appear before YHWH'—'Presence,' the 'Chagigah,' and 'Joyousness.' As specially applied to the Passover, the first of these terms meant, that every one was to come up to Jerusalem and to offer a burnt-offering, if possible on the first, or else on one of the other six days of the feast. This burnt-offering was to be taken only from 'Cholin' (or profane substance), that is, from such as did not otherwise belong to YHWH, either as tithes, firstlings, or things devoted, etc. The Chagigah, which was strictly a peace-offering, might be twofold. This first Chagigah was offered on the 14th of Nisan, the day of the Paschal sacrifice, and formed afterwards part of the Paschal Supper. The second Chagigah was offered on the 15th of Nisan, or the first day of the feast of

149 Technically speaking, there are four different occasions within this 8 day timeline. The one not mentioned above is "First Fruits" or *bikkurim*, which happens on 16 Nisan, the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:9-14). We are simply focused here on the main occasions that run together as opposed to parallel occasions on the same days.

unleavened bread. It is this second Chagigah which the Jews were afraid they might be unable to eat, if they contracted defilement in the judgment-hall of Pilate (John 18:28).

In reference to the first Chagigah, the *Mishnah* lays down the rule, that it was only to be offered if the Paschal day fell on a week-day, not on a Sabbath[150], and if the Paschal lamb alone would not have been sufficient to give a satisfying supper to the company which gathered around it (*Pes*. vi. 4).

As in the case of all other peace-offerings, part of this Chagigah might be kept, though not for longer than one night and two days from its sacrifice. Being a voluntary offering, it was lawful to bring it from sacred things (such as tithes of the flock).

But the Chagigah for the 15th of Nisan was obligatory, and had therefore to be brought from "Cholin." The third duty incumbent on those who appeared at the feast was "joyousness." This expression, as we have seen, simply referred to the fact that, according to their means, all Israel were, during the course of this festival, with joyous heart to offer peace-offerings, which might be chosen from sacred things (Deut. 27:7).

Thus the sacrifices which every Israelite was to offer at the Passover were, besides his share in the Paschal lamb, a burnt-offering, the Chagigah (one or two), and offerings of joyousness— as Elohim had blessed each household. (The Temple: Its Ministry and Services, Chapter 11, "The Three Things")

So here is the real reason why John's account appears to be "running a day behind." The reality is, as Edersheim asserts, the Pharisees were still on the same schedule as Y'shua and his disciples were in the accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke. On the other hand, the Pharisees could point to the daylight period from dawn to sunset on 15 Nisan also technically as a "day of preparation"! As a result, the timing of the "day of preparation" terminology can be applied to the daylight periods of 14, 15 or even 16 Nisan, assuming the 16th was a Friday, the "day of preparation" for the regular weekly Shabbat! We will see how this pattern actually manifests in the Good News record a bit later.

Is it Passover or is it the Feast of Unleavened Bread?

As just alluded to above, there is some confusion as to which sacred occasion is intended in the Good News record. The writings themselves, like many documents written by Jews and for Jews, simply assume that their readership knows when and when not to interchange the terms: *"**On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Y'shua and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"*** (Matthew 26:17) As the reader can easily see, the technical beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread would have been a day after the Passover Seder, yet there are verses that appear to confuse this point: *"Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Y'shua and kill him"* (Mark 14:1).

So both celebrations, one flowing into the other, are two days away according to Mark. That would harmonize the details of that and the parallel account in Matthew 26 as 12 Nisan. Other citations, however, go the other way, and seem to blur these distinctions: *"Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching...Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed"* (Luke 22:1, 7). And so, technically speaking, the Passover lamb was sacrificed at twilight on the 14th, not the beginning of the 15th after sunset, which is the separate Feast of Unleavened Bread! Luke 22:7 is also, though, one of two extremely

150 If this ruling in the Mishnah applied two centuries before Y'shua's time, then it provides very important evidence for clarifying the timeline. The reason is, it would explain why the Galileans celebrated a day before the residents of Jerusalem, as Y'shua and his followers would have taken the first chagigah on the 14th. These burnt offerings created strain on the nation of Israel if they all had to be done on one day, and since we know this particular Passover did not fall on a Friday but was a "high day," it seems clear the Pharisees were taking advantage of the rules since many of them also had to help their fellow Israelites as priests on the day before, leaving no time to do the chagigah themselves until the 15th.

helpful passages with the clarifying phrase "when the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed."[151]

In addition, Luke using the terms interchangeably doesn't help the matter, but he is probably simplifying for Gentile readers while simultaneously knowing that Jewish readers will understand what he means.[152]

Will The Real Day of Preparation Please Stand Up?

Technically speaking a "day of preparation" is normally supposed to be the daylight period before a weekly Shabbat. However, when Annual and Weekly Shabbats hit as close together as they do here, this kind of distinction can easily go right out the proverbial window along with any clarity it might have also had!

The fact of the matter is, we are not dealing with one preparation day in a week here, but three! To see why, we have to re-construct that fateful last week from the best and clearest time references the Gospels offer. We begin with this line from John: *"Six days before the Passover, Y'shua arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Y'shua had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Y'shua's honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him… The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Y'shua was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of Master YHWH!"* (John 12:1-2, 12-13) There can be no doubt on the matter. This reference in John begins on 8 Nisan. The very next day then, the 9th, is the Triumphal Entry that all four Gospels record, or five days before the Last Supper.

The next step in fleshing out the Passion Week comes from following Mark's timeline from the Triumphal Entry until Y'shua's arrest: *"As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Y'shua sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Master needs it and will send it back here shortly.'" They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They answered as Y'shua had told them to, and the people let them go. When they brought the colt to Y'shua and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields.* ***Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of Master YHWH!" "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest!" Y'shua entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve. The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Y'shua was hungry.*** *Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it"* (Mark 11:1-14).

Notice that Mark's details are almost identical to John's, and bring us 10 Nisan. Both accounts talk about Y'shua being in Bethany before the Triumphal Entry. Mark, though, gives us added

151 Mark 14:12 is the other reference, and both passages root the time squarely to 14 Nisan at twilight.

152 Josephus makes the distinction both succinctly and clearly when he says in Antiquities 3.10.5, "In the month of Xanthicus, which is by us called *Nisan,* and is the beginning of our year, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, (for in this month it was that we were delivered from bondage under the Egyptians,) the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice which I before told you we slew when we came out of Egypt, and which was called the *Passover;* and so we do celebrate this Passover in companies, leaving nothing of what we sacrifice till the day following. The feast of unleavened bread succeeds that of the Passover, and falls on the fifteenth day of the month, and continues seven days, wherein they feed on unleavened bread; on every one of which days two bulls are killed, and one ram, and seven lambs. Now these lambs are entirely burnt, besides the kid of the goats which is added to all the rest, for sins; for it is intended as a feast for the priest on every one of those days. But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that day they do not touch them."

information that the famous cursing of the fig tree happened exactly one day later, or 10 Nisan. The same exact moment and surrounding events with only slight variations in details are also recorded in Matthew 21:18-25:46[153] and Luke 19:28-22:1-6[154]. So now, with all three accounts in synchronization, we can look at the three specific days Mark mentions, with some very minor assistance from Luke and John, for 11, 12 and 13 Nisan:[155] ***"When evening came, they went out of the city. In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots.*** *Peter remembered and said to Y'shua, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!" "Have faith in Elohim," Y'shua answered"* (Mark 11:19-22).

"Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Y'shua and kill him" (Mark 14:1).

Between these two citations are very long discourses in chapter 12 and 13, but the chronology never wavers. Luke 22:37-38 also confirms the passage of two days and nights from this time until 12 Nisan, two days before the Passover. From there we are told that Yehuda went out and looked for an opportunity to hand over Y'shua. The most likely time for him to have done this would have been sometime after sunset when the disciples had retired from their evening meal, bringing us to the 13th. It is possible that the precise moment Yehuda did this is recorded in John 13:29-30, because the disciples had not obtained supplies for the Passover then but it was still after sunset!

Mark then picks up the chronology effortlessly: *"On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Y'shua's disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"* (Mark 14:12).

And so here we are, on the afternoon of 14 Nisan once more! The question is, though, from all these details, where is the day – or rather, days – of preparation? *"**Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.** Y'shua sent Peter and John, saying, **"Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover." "Where do you want us to prepare for it**?" they asked. He replied, "As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, **where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there."** They left and found things just as Y'shua had told them. So they prepared the Passover. When the hour came, Y'shua and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer"* (Luke 22:7-14).

So on the day of the 14th, before Y'shua is arrested and before the Paschal lamb is slain, this is technically a day of preparation![156] But then look at this: *"And it was the eve of the Paskha, and it was about the sixth hour, and he said to the Yehudeans, "Behold your King!"* (John 19:14).

This is a day later, another day and that next morning, or 15 Nisan. But then we read: *"And on the next day, which was after the sunset, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered with Peelatos. And they were saying to him, "Our master, we have remembered that that deceiver would say while he was alive that, "**After three days, I will arise.**" Command, therefore, that*

153 Probably because, while Y'shua does not mention the withered fig tree the following day like Mark does, Matthew 24:32 uses it in parable and the rest of the discourse also seems to have been given at that same time.

154 In Luke's case we have to make a highly probable assumption that "the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread were approaching" is also about two days away, or 12 Nisan. We can do this safely, however, because 22:37-38 mentions at least two days and two nights from the Triumphal Entry that is now fixed at 10 Nisan, and from there we simply run out of time!

155 13 Nisan is also mentioned in John 13:1 (it was just before the Passover feast), continuing to verse 31. This is true for two reasons. First, Yehuda is said to leave clearly at night after the discourse, and that means from there is 14 Nisan. Second, the occasion of washing the disciples' feet here could not have been Passover because verse 29 says the disciples thought Yehuda was going to buy "supplies for the Feast" when he left that night as well!

156 This is because once the countdown for Passover starts in the afternoon of 14 Nisan, the Jews are continuously occupied until the 15th day that begins in a few hours after sunset. Therefore, they have to "prepare" everything for both days in advance just as they would have begun doing so a few hours before the weekly Shabbat on a Friday afternoon!

they guard the grave until the third day, or else his disciples come steal him in the night and say to the people that he has risen from the dead. And the last deception should become worse than the first. Peelatos said to them, "You have the guards. Go and take precautions as you know." And they departed and took precautions by the grave and set a seal upon that stone together with the guards." (Matthew 27:62-66)

Matthew's timing here is significant, in this passage Y'shua was already in the tomb, and they are setting a guard, it is now *after sunset* and into 16 Nisan. Notice that John 18:28 records Pharisees going to Pilate, but they don't want to be defiled by entering the dwelling of a Gentile, which would render them unclean for the *chagigah* offering happening later that day. However, here in Matthew the context and situation is very different, these same men have no problem going to the tomb to seal it, an even greater defilement, because the sun had set and the "high Sabbat" was now over.

In other words, the Pharisees know that once they eat the *chagigah* and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15 Nisan) is past, they will not have to wait another month to do Passover all over again![157] Numbers 19:11-22 is very specific that even touching a bone or going into a grave or tomb will constitute uncleanness for seven days! But, if the tomb is made secure before the third day, and the Pharisees can make this request "after the sunset" or very early the next morning, then the only time this can happen would be Friday, the day after the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

But, since there is other solid evidence that Y'shua dies the afternoon after his arrest on the High Shabbat of the 15th, that day could only have been a Thursday. It is easy, then to see why "three days and three nights" from here, while not being precisely 72 hours, nevertheless can be reckoned from the first daylight period Thursday afternoon through to sunset to a resurrection right at dawn on the first day of the week:

Thursday 3PM-6 PM (day 1)[158]
Thursday 6 PM-Friday 6 AM (night 1)
Friday 6 AM-6 PM (day 2)
Friday 6 PM-Saturday 6 AM (night 2)
Saturday 6 AM-6 PM (day 3)
Saturday 6 PM-Sunday 6 AM (night 3)

So no, the resurrection timeline does not fit with a Friday execution day, but that doesn't mean it can't be Thursday.

Just three days and three nights or after three days towards four?

On the other hand, let's consider the possibility of a Nisan 15th Wednesday crucifixion. *"These are YHWH's appointed feasts, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: YHWH's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the YHWH's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast"* (Leviticus 23:4-6). And, *"...you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt"* (Deuteronomy 16:6).

There is an interesting variant to this timeline, a more precise clarifying detail that could change everything we have seen thus far: *"'Sir,' they said, we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, **'After three days** I will rise again'"* (Matthew 27:63).

*"He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and **after three days rise again**"* (Mark 8:31).

157 See Numbers 9:6-14 for regulations of the Second Passover that was set up to accommodate those who were on a long journey or who had been defiled by contact with a corpse or grave.
158 Using 6 AM and 6 PM loosely as shorthand for sunrise and sunset, respectively.

*"He said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, **and after three days he will rise'"*** (Mark 9:31).

In other words, in this interpretation the three days and three nights that Y'shua spends in the heart of the earth – also known as the Sign of Jonah – is a minimum requirement. He is not going to rise before that. If that's the case, then he must be raised when these are completed, which by definition, puts the resurrection sometime into the fourth day but before that same day would complete! Nowhere does it directly say Y'shua has to rise instantly when three days and three nights are done but only at some point after they are done, and to this end the Gospels give us an interesting parallel: *"And when Y'shua had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split"* (Matthew 27:50-56).

"After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for a messenger from Master YHWH came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The messenger said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Y'shua, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you" (Matthew 28:1-7).

There was an earthquake then just moments after Y'shua died, so why should we view another earthquake at the moment of his resurrection as mere coincidence? It makes sense, in concert with Mark 16:9, that the earthquake that was marking the moment of the resurrection happened as the women were on their way, starting while still dark (John 20:1) but with the sun rising (Mark 16:2) as they approached the tomb.

Having made this point, however, the Wednesday crucifixion evidence could work here as well. If Wednesday was in fact the 15th of Nisan instead, then two other possibilities present themselves.

The first one is the time frame between burial and sunset counts as a day, but the minimum three day and three night requirement is met on Saturday night but with YHWH choosing to wait a few more hours before the actual resurrection.

Of course the second possibility is that just as they bury Y'shua the sun is setting, and therefore the "day" that begins the three day and three night clock would start after sunset, or "the greater yom, and it was evening and it was morning," etc. In that case, the first "night" would not count as night but as the first 24 hour day, followed by two other days and nights, before running out at Sunday dawn. This last possibility would make sense because that would explain why the sunrise and the earthquake could act as precise markers for the resurrection moment.

When Was the Resurrection? Part I

The most important event recorded by Renewed Covenant writers is undoubtedly the resurrection of Mashiyach, and there are plenty of perspectives and opinions as to when his actual rising from death happened. My focus has always been on the Peshitta Aramaic traditions as the most authoritative source of information available, and so I am very narrow—some might argue rigid—in the way that I discern chronology and other facts from Scripture. Put simply, to me the process is very cut and dried: If the Peshitta says it and the Aramaic cannot be interpreted in any other manner, that's what I go with.

Furthermore, while I may analyze significant variants between other traditions, they will never have the same weight to me, but I believe it is important that all accessible materials are made available to the reader for each individual to consider. When I do this type of annotation, however, it is always from a standpoint of Peshitta as New Testament Masorah (tradition/base text), with proper explorations of variants confined to the footnotes.

My beloved brother in faith Baruch Ben Daniel, however, has a more expansive model in mind that incorporates other sources like the Greek NT to make a more level synthesis of thought from his perspective. In other words, my showing this Aramaic word only means X would not be the end of his analysis on the matter, and as Editor-in-Chief along with being a solid scholar in his own right, that decision is his privilege to make.

However, as Translator-in-Chief, the ultimate responsibility of delivering the best possible English version from the Peshitta must rest solely on my shoulders. As a result, when we disagreed about some of the elements of the timing, we decided our discussions were most likely a smaller version of an even greater dialogue that was going on in Netzarim, Israelite, Messianic and also Christian quarters. How do we remove two millennia of Gentile cultural accretions and use what we know of Judaism in First Century Israel to shed significant light on these varying schools of thought?

The answer, as it turned out, was both simple and a tad bizarre: We would reflect both views in companion essays and give the reader full access. In the end, neither of us wanted to ignore key facts about our audience. We knew that not everyone viewed the Peshitta traditions with the same authority that we did. We also knew that small debates on these matters could do more harm than good if readers thought their views were not at least considered, if not embraced, by one or both of us. Therefore, because the difference was both minor yet also a very passionate decision for every believer in Y'shua as Mashiyach, this unusual course of point-counterpoint was adopted. Rules were laid down and the compromise was agreed to.

As Translator-in-Chief I get to put my view first, but before getting to that I must say a few words about what Baruch and I do agree on:

> 1) We agree that the most important thing is that the resurrection happened in accordance with Tanakh law and prophecies from Mashiyach himself. It is the resurrection, not the death on the stake, which is the central redemptive point of all we hold dear. True, one leads to the other, but we would not, for example, look at depicting a bleeding man on a cross as the main element. He is not on the execution stake anymore. He is risen!
>
> 2) We agree that our interpretations must, first and foremost, align with Tanakh as we best understand it in its original language of Hebrew. Tanakh is far more than a guide. It is binding and authoritative. It is also a manifestation of the Son, as the divine *Miltha*, or Word, of his Father YHWH's mouth.
>
> 3) We agree that Western Christianity has taken the potential timing of a Sunday dawn resurrection and, independently of whether it happened then or closer to sunset of what is from western reckoning the previous evening, have perverted its occurrence into doctrinal beliefs that find no support in Scripture. So whether this is the post Shabbat

timing of a *havdilah* meal we are talking about in places like Acts 20:7, literally minutes before sunrise, or somewhere in between, the changing of Shabbat to Sun-Day worship will never be accepted by either of us as valid.

4) Finally, we agree that whatever may have happened to further cloud Christian vision through the prism of Constantine and the Roman-Byzantine empires, this is a separate historical issue from what the original Scripture says. Specifically, the Enemy is expert at counterfeiting truth by giving accurate facts joined to a plausible lie.

Inclusive reckoning of the day is scriptural

One of the main strengths of the Wednesday to Saturday argument is that three consecutive 24-hour periods are required before Y'shua can rise. These proponents say, quite rightly, that Western Christianity's emphasis on a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection is not only unscriptural, but it goes against Y'shua's own words: *"For as Yonan was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, likewise will the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights"* (Matthew 12:38-40).

Three days and three nights cannot be jammed into a period lasting from late Friday afternoon and out of the tomb door on Sunday morning! As implied above, I agree with this assessment. However, these two possibilities are not the only ones out there. It is my belief that the literal truth of Y'shua's words was followed perfectly, but that doesn't mean it had to take 72 exact hours for him to rise.

The fact is, the ancients did not even have 60-minute hours as we do, but divided the day into twelve equal parts that varied with the time of year[159]. Granted, with the day in question being right after the Spring Equinox, this difference between literal and perceived/marked time would have only been a matter of perhaps forty-five minutes, but at least it begins to show that some flexibility of how time was viewed was inherent in the actual system.

The question is, though: Is it really the case that the last few hours before sunset could actually count as a full daylight period when counting towards the Resurrection itself? To find out, we need to look at Tanakh: *"You shall make a **window** (tsohar) for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks"* (Genesis 6:16).

The word *tsohar* is used here to mean "window" or "roof" in its archaic form. However, when applied as metaphor to the time of day, it takes on another meaning: *"Prepare war against her; Arise, and let us attack at tsohar (noon). Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of the evening lengthen!"* (Jeremiah 6:4)

In every other instance of this word (Genesis 43:16, 25; Deuteronomy 28:29; 2 Samuel 4:5; 1 Kings 18:26, 27, 29, 20:16; 2 Kings 4:20; Job 5:14, 11:17; Psalm 37:6, 55:17, 91:6; Song of Songs 1:7; Isaiah 16:3, 58:10, 59:10; Jeremiah 6:4, 15:8, 20:16, Zephaniah 2:4) it reads as "noon" or "afternoon". The reason is, the sun is said to travel a circuit[160] or in Hebrew *tekuwfa/teshuvah*. Then, as it journeys towards the half-way marker, that same point is literally directly above us as a "roof" or "window", marking the time of day accordingly. Similarly, as the Jeremiah 6:4 quote shows, the mixing of shadow and light – for this is another meaning of *ereb* (Exodus 12:38, Nehemiah 13:3, Jeremiah 25:20, 24, 50:37)[161] – is the way to view the day "declining" because the sun's journey is mostly over.

Another word that has the same idea is found here: *"On the fifth day he arose to go early in the morning, and the girl's father said, "Please sustain yourself, and wait until **afternoon** (natah)"; so both of them ate"* (Judges 19:8).

159 John 11:9.

160 For more information, please consult *Wheel of Stars*.

161 It should be noted that it is the mixing concept that remains the same in these passages. However, instead of the mixing of light and dark the image is instead of racial mixing, or foreigners.

Brown Drivers-Briggs Hebrew English Lexicon notes that *natah* also means "to stretch out, extend, spread out, pitch, turn, pervert, incline, bend, or bow", so we have again the sense of the sun's journey reaching its zenith and then beginning its decline in the afternoon. Either way, though, any portion of the sun's circuit is surely linked to and counted as a day! Although, for the sake of being complete, I should also show how this applies in Tanakh on a practical basis: *"If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, **his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day,** so that you do not defile the land which YHWH your Elohim is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of Elohim"* (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).

By the strict language of this verse, a man who is killed, say, around 4 PM, cannot remain on the execution stake after sunset. Therefore, that time of his execution also counts with the "day", because the "day" does not extend after night falls with respect to this command. We see idea elsewhere: *"Now you shall keep [the Paschal Lamb] until the fourteenth day of the same month. **Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.** And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. **Then they shall eat the flesh on that night**; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it"* (Exodus 12:6-8).

In this case, then, we can easily see that even "twilight" – that last interval prior to night falling – is counted nevertheless as the same "day". And, here it is consistent in the Renewed Covenant Writings: *"When it was evening on the first day of the week…"* (Yochanan 20:19).

Therefore "inclusive reckoning" is simply the way Scripture chooses to count time, meaning that "three days and three nights" can last anywhere from about 61 to 74 hours, depending on when a burial is completed and the time of year it happens. As long as then Y'shua can be shown to be in the tomb sometime before sunset on Thursday afternoon, a Sunday dawn resurrection can easily fit within the three days and three nights required by Mashiyach himself.

Mark 16:9-20 is Scripture!

While I will show that all four Good News accounts are in perfect harmony with respect to the time of the resurrection being just at dawn on the first day of the week, I have noticed that some are not convinced about the variety of endings in Mark 16 that exist on the Western side.

But, as stated in the footnote of Mark 16:9 and in my book *Ruach Qadim: Aramaic Origins of the New Testament*, pages 96-100, there is much ancient support for the full 20-verse version of Mark's last chapter. Rather than list that evidence again here, I invite the reader to consider that material before deciding on the general point I am making. I view the diversity of readings on the Western side as a smokescreen having nothing to do with the authority of the Peshitta or the information it relates. What's more, I will even extend that authority to the Greek traditions as well, since they are predominately in agreement with the Aramaic as I understand it.

Therefore, we shall let Mark's Gospel speak for itself, rather than to insert our own preferences. By that standard, it can be argued that Mark intended to end with the resurrection happening before the women reached the tomb and saw the stone rolled away. Additionally, we have two places in the portion of Mark 16 that everyone agrees with that firm up the clear but "controversial" ninth verse.

First, 16:2 specifically says that the women came to the tomb when "the sun was rising." Aramaic and Greek are both extremely clear on this reading. From verse 2, then, we have a linear unfolding of time:

"And at early morning on the first of the week, they came to the cemetery as the sun was rising" (verse 2).

"But he said to them, "Do not have fear, Y'shua the Nasraya whom you seek who was executed on the stake, has risen!" (verse 6)

There can be no denying that even the shortest reading contains 16:6 saying that he had risen after 16:2 says the sun had dawned!

What can seem confusing, though, is that John's account says that Mary of Magdala was the first to see the risen Master, but Mark has put that reference in the next line, as if that happened later, as *"then, at early morning on the first of the week, he had risen and appeared first to Maryam of Magdala, she from whom he had cast out seven demons."*

Is the "then" meaning he appeared to Mary Magdalene after these women? Not necessarily. All that has happened is that Mark (or perhaps Keepa redacting him) has switched emphasis to another scene. He has backtracked, just as we might do so ourselves when trying to describe the greatest event in history! Granted, seeing this chronology gets much easier when we combine it with John's, but that has been successfully done many times before, including in my first book *Signs of the Cross*, pages 453-466.

We can also see this pattern of turn-back storytelling in the first few chapters of Genesis, where it happens with respect to the creation of both the Earth and man. The original Good News, penned in Hebrew's sister language in the land of Israel, could hardly escape this same tendency. But careful analysis can reveal the real chronology with just a little extra effort and without doing violence to the plain meaning of the text.

All four Gospels agree on the timing

And finally, Mark 16 is not alone in the details it gives us, although it is acknowledged that the different writing styles in Matthew, Luke and John can present some challenges to understanding the timing, if we are not careful.

For example, in reading John 20:1, we can be left with the impression that there was no light present at all: *"On the first (day) of the week, came Mary of Magdala in the morning/dawn,* ***while it was still dark****, to the tomb and saw that the stone was removed from the grave."*

See, the way it reads says "in the morning/dawn" which means that at most the women could have left home "while dark" but the sun was rising as they were making their way to the tomb. Not only does this agree perfectly with the literal account in Mark 16:1-9, it makes sense in terms of Torah observance as well.

Clearly two Shabbats are mentioned in the Good News accounts, one at the time of the crucifixion and one just before resurrection. John 19:31 tells us that the (Annual) Shabbat was closing. This is one of seven occasions that counts as Shabbat regardless as to the day of the week it falls on. Therefore, this Shabbat had to be set-apart even in comparison with the others that occur once a week, and again the text gives us the reason for that phrase very readily. Furthermore, Luke 23:56 says, "and rested on the Shabbat ***as was Commanded***." Luke seems to be doing the same thing John did by making his own clarification. I mean, of course, we are commanded to rest on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread which just happened on that previous Thursday, so why point to "the Commandment"?

The answer has to be that Luke was aware of John's emphases[162] and wanted to reference the only Shabbat covered by the Ten Commandments, namely the weekly happening the very next day after John's "high day"![163]

162 Which seems strongly implied in his own introduction, Luke 1:1-5.

163 These chronological details are documented much more extensively in Ruach Qadim and in the translation portion of this diglot. They detail the fact that Daniel 9:24-27 points to 483 years after the rebuilding of all Jerusalem, and not just her Temple, which is referenced in Ezra 7:11-26 also and tagged to 457 BCE. That calculation agrees with details in Luke and John (15th year of Tiberius, 46 years from Herod starting his expansion of the Temple) and points to the year 27 CE as the time of Y'shua's immersion. From there, the Passovers and other holiday details listed in John point to a 3 ½ year ministry, the half-week of confirming the covenant mentioned also in Daniel 9:24-27, when that prophet said Mashiyach would be "cut off", or killed (Isaiah 53:8).

Now let's look at some other information: *"Now in the closing (evening)*[164] *of the Sabbath, as the first of the week was dawning, came Maryam of Magdala and the other Maryam that they might see the grave"* (Matthew 28:1).

The accompanying footnote has all the needed information. For the moment, though, my main point is that even the Greek reading of *mia ton Sabbaton* can be better understood through the Aramaic use of metaphor. The timing here is then after the first among the Shabbats, or after the weekly one had concluded. From there, Matthew gets even more specific as he talks about the first day of the week "in dawning", clearly distinguishing the morning period from the dead of night. Once again, the concepts shown here work lock step with what we have seen before in Mark and John.

This leaves just one more account to look at: *"Now on the first day of the week, at dawn while still dark, they came to the tomb and brought the spices, those, which they had prepared. And there were other women with them"* (Luke 23:1). Luke's treatment here is just as clear as Mark's with "first day of the week, at dawn, while still dark". If the women are on their way at that time, and the tomb was empty when they got there a few minutes later, the only time Y'shua could have risen was during that same dawning! As a result, all four Gospels clearly point to Y'shua rising at early dawn on that first day of the week.

Conclusion

While I understand the passionate feelings of many Netzarim that we must not tolerate twisting of historical events, this, however, does not mean other Tanakh patterns are not present even if Y'shua did not rise from death on Shabbat. Furthermore, the Wednesday to Saturday night scenario would still, in some cases, have the resurrection occur after sunset which, from Jewish reckoning is still "after the Shabbat" and "on the first day of the week." Either way, he did not rise on Shabbat, but that is fine, since he, like us, are supposed to rest on Shabbat anyway! And so, why don't we focus on other timeworn Hebraic patterns that are clearly entwined with the Passion Drama?

164 Aramaic literally reads "***b'ramsha din b'shabata***", or "in the evening of the Shabbat". The literal meaning of ramsha is "evening" or ***erev***, but here it is used idiomatically. The dawn and set of the sun is not the only use; there is the "dawn of a new era" or as John 19:31 reads "***mitil d'shabata negha***", "the Shabbat was dawning." When we compare other verses that record this event, the time of the day being referred to is clearly more than half a day before literal dawn. In John chapter 19, when they put Y'shua into the tomb, they still refer to it as being "day", both in Aramaic and Greek. The "dawn" metaphor "to begin" is confirmed in John 19:42. A more literal form, "***mitil d'shabata aiala***", would be read as "the Sabbath was beginning/entering/coming about." What is true for "dawning" is also true of "setting" in the sense of "conclusion" as is meant here. This agrees with Greek version, Aramaic information in Matthew, and with other writers in the NT. Murdock and Etheridge also confirm this idiomatic reading in their translations.

When was the resurrection? Part II

By Baruch Ben Daniel

"For as Yonan was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights,
likewise will the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights."
Matthew 12:40

Let's begin by "leveling the playing field" and putting aside any "scholarly" or "theological" musings that "the Jews" have an idiomatic expression that makes "three days and three nights" equivalent to "three days and two evenings" or a day and a half. There's also plenty of Jewish and Christian religious fables about Y'shua, Paul and the resurrection, so let's just rely on Scripture for the plain reading. Yonan (Jonah) 1:17 spells it out: *"shalowsh yom, shalowsh yayil"* three days three nights. It's, in fact, a universal idiom to say "I'll see you in three days" and not mean a day and a half. When we read *"shalowsh yom, shalowsh yayil"* in Hebrew it means exactly the same thing as in English. Additionally, we need not speculate whether Y'shua or his disciples sanctified the calendars of the Essenes, Sadducees, or Samaritans, which is the folly of some.

Let's also remember, as my beloved Netzari Jewish brother Andrew Gabriel Roth points out, that there were no less than four different levels of "Preparation days" during that week: "Preparation" for the Pesach seder; for the Shabbat of the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for First-fruits (to begin the counting of the omer–sheaf); and, for the weekly Seventh Day Shabbat. There are no Jewish idioms recorded in or outside of Scripture of a "Preparation day" that solely belongs to the weekly Shabbat. In addition, an investigation of the Aramaic and Greek texts that underlie the word "preparation" indicate a cadre of inconsistencies that the reader should be aware of, many of these now footnoted in this edition.

There are two potential days of the week that could qualify Y'shua to be three days and three nights in the tomb, and reappear when he did: Wednesday or Thursday. If we go with a Wednesday scenario, we need not truncate any days or nights into less than three full 24 hour periods, but we also run into another issue which we will discuss shortly. Truncating "light periods" or "dark periods" could potentially invite accusations by naysayers that Y'shua's followers had faked the resurrection, or, some might argue that maybe he wasn't really dead after all – or that his disciples paid off the Roman soldiers and whisked him away for a few days….As ridiculous as that sounds, there are people today who believe such things. No, Pilate was no dummy! He wanted a dead corpse and he got one (Mark 15:44); consequently, Y'shua's tomb was put under strict observation. The chief priests and Pharisees were worried about what was going to happen in three days (Matthew 27:62), which is ironic considering that most Christians believe he was only in the tomb for a day and a half (Friday night to Sunday morning).

The expression *"shalowsh yom, shalowsh yayil"* can also refer to light and dark periods. It would not be wrong to wish someone a good "day" after departing a luncheon appointment, or suggesting that we make hay "while the sun shines", because:" when it is night no man can work." The point being, it's normal to think of day and night as light and dark portions. Therefore, if we have three light periods and three dark periods we've, in fact, satisfied the "three days and three nights" requirement, which is the case with the Thursday scenario.

Scripture tells us that Y'shua and his disciples observed Pesach (Passover) on the 14th of Abib at *"beyn ha eruvim"* (between the evenings). Both Torah and historical records indicate that this is between the 9th (3pm) and 11th (5pm) hours. To complicate things, Yochanan 18:28 states, "it was morning and they did not enter into the Praetorium, that they not be defiled before they had eaten the Paskha." Certain Pharisees had not eaten the Passover lamb as yet, because of a massive logistical challenge (see footnote on this verse). YHWH required all males (Deut 16:16) to come up to Jerusalem to observe Pesach. To satisfy this requirement, approximately

100,000 to 200,000 lambs may have been required. Therefore, the Pharisees had extended the slaughtering of lambs into the 15th of Abib so as to meet the rigorous demands.

From the 6th (noon) to the 9th hour (3pm) on the 15th of Abib darkness covered the land (Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44), a clear message from YHWH to stop everything and pay attention. That would also put Y'shua's death at the same time that the lambs were being slaughtered in the Temple.

Yochanan 19:41 tells of a garden at the same location Y'shua was executed, with a new tomb, where Y'shua's body was laid. Matt 27:45 tells us Y'shua died at the ninth hour (3 pm) on the annual Shabbat of Chag haMatzah (15th of Abib). On Abib 15th in Jerusalem the sun sets at close to 7 pm, therefore, his disciples had approximately four hours from his last breath until sunset. Deut 21:23 instructs; "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him in that day." Because Abib 15th is an annual Sabbath, both Joseph and Nicodemus would be intent on sanctifying the day and putting Y'shua's body in the tomb as rapidly as possible. The urgency to remove the body was twofold, it was on a Shabbat, and, they were commanded to bury the body the same day that he hung upon the tree. Joseph and Nicodemus were men of wealth and influence, that acted in unison and haste, so we start the clock on the day (light period) of Abib 15th when Y'shua was put into the tomb.

As Andrew pointed out in Part 1, counting three days and three nights from Thursday, begins on the light period of Abib 15, so let's add it up: THURSDAY: day and night: (1 day); FRIDAY: day and night: (1 day); SHABBAT: day and night (1 day): EQUALS a total of "three days and three nights". Hebrew days begin at sunset, so in Hebrew we count: Yom Chamishi: ½ day; Yom Shishi: 1 day; Shabbat: 1 day; Yom Rishon: ½ day. On Yom Rishon (Sunday) we count the dark period (Saturday night) according the Gregorian calendar. Scripture tells us that Y'shua resurrected before sunrise; "On the first of the week, in the morning while it was dark, Maryam of Magdala came to the tomb and saw that the stone was removed from the grave." (Yochanan 20:1) To fulfill *"shalowsh yom, shalowsh yayil"* Y'shua rose from the tomb before sunrise. Y'shua said, "three days and three nights" which implies that we start our count with a "yom" a daylight period, and end with a dark period.

Firstfruits

Pesach occurs on Abib 14th of the Hebrew calendar. *Chag HaMatzah*, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, begins on Abib 15th. *Sefirat Ha'omer* (The Counting of the Omer) begins on Abib 16th. The Feast of *Shavuot* (Weeks) or Pentecost is counted seven weeks from Abib 16th, which is the day after the annual Shabbat of *Chag HaMatzah*. The Torah, in Exodus 34:22, refers to Pentecost as "the feast of weeks". Numbers 28:26 says, "Also in the day of the firstfruits (*bikkur*), when you bring a new meat offering unto YHWH, after your weeks (*shavua*) be out, you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no servile work." The feast of *Shavuot* (weeks) is based on counting "weeks", which is why it is "*Shavuot*". Deut 16:9-10 says, "Count seven (*sheva*) weeks (*shavua*): start to count the seven (*sheva*) weeks (*shavua*) from when you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. And keep the feast (*chag*) of weeks (*shavua*) unto YHWH Elohim with a tribute of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give as YHWH Elohim has blessed you." This is where ***Sefirat Ha'omer*** (counting of the omer) and ***Shavuot*** (Feast of Weeks) are derived.

Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy tell us to count the "seven weeks", but in most English translations Leviticus reads: "from the "morrow after the Shabbat" (The word Shabbat does not exist in Peshitta Tanakh or LXX). Nevertheless, the Sadducees and Samaritans (who heavily influenced the Karaites) used that verse to depart from the Torah based calendar that Y'shua, the Apostles, and the Pharisees observed. Sadducees, Boethusians (a high ranking family of

Sadducees), and Samaritans counted Pentecost from the day after the weekly seventh day Sabbath that fell during Unleavened Bread. Each of these factions were in a vicious power struggle with the Pharisees and each other. The Samaritans claimed to be the true priesthood, built a temple on Mount Gerizim, and become fierce enemies of the Yehudim.

It wasn't only Jewish sects that confused the original reading of Torah. The Greek Septuagint (LXX) in Lev 23:11 states "on the morrow after the first day" so "theologians" of the World Wide Church of God (WWCG - Armstrong) concluded that *Sefirat Ha'omer* had to fall on a Monday. They saw "the first day" to mean Sunday, so then the "morrow after" was a Monday so they originally kept Pentecost on Mondays. The LXX, which existed a century before the Pharisees and Sadducees came along, clearly means: "the morrow after the first day of Unleavened Bread." Both WWCG and Karaite "theologians" have influenced many within the modern Israelite/ Ephraimite (or British/American Israelitish identity) movement who prefer to identify more with Samaritan and Karaite traditions than with Netzarim Jewish values.

When we investigate Aramaic and Greek New Testament texts we clearly find that the Apostle Paul was a Jew and a Pharisee (see Acts 28:17 and footnote). None of the Apostles followed the authority of the Sadducees who denied the resurrection, angels, and the spirit, nor did they incline towards Samaritan traditions. Acts 15:5 states that many Pharisees became followers of Y'shua. Acts 21:20 states that tens of thousands of Jews believed in Y'shua and were zealous for Torah. In the book of Acts, there are about a dozen instances where the Apostles were praying and teaching inside Pharisee synagogues. In Acts 18:8 the chief ruler of the synagogue believed on Y'shua with all this house. Luke 24:52 states that Y'shua's followers were in the Temple at all times, praising and blessing Elohim, so the evidence clearly points to Y'shua and his followers worshipping on a unified calendar with the Pharisees at both synagogue and Temple services.

A closer investigation of Tanakh also reveals that in 2 Chronicles 8:13, the Israelites referred to Pentecost as "the feast of weeks". Not only is it clear that the Apostles celebrated the Feasts on the calendar of the Yehudeans, and the majority of Israelites, but testimony from first century Jewish historian Josephus (Antiquities 3:250-253) also reveals that Abib 16th is the day that ***Sefirat Ha'omer*** is celebrated, and Josephus was an eye witness to these celebrations in Y'shua's days.

Joshua 5:10-12 says, "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month (Abib 14th) at even, in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old grain of the land on the morrow after the passover (Abib 15th), unleavened cakes, and parched (or roasted) grain in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the grain of the land (Abib 16th); neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Notice the progression, the morrow after Abib 14th is *Chag HaMatzah* (Feast of Unleavened Bread) on Abib 15th and they ate the old grain for Unleavened bread, but then on Abib 16th the manna stopped. Exodus 16:26-27 tells us that the manna ceased on the Seventh day Shabbat. Astronomical charts indicate that on 1405 BCE, Abib 14th fell on a Thursday, therefore *Sefirat Ha'omer* fell on a weekly Shabbat, the day the manna stopped.

Clearly, the counting of the omer begins on Abib 16th. So it was on the resurrection week, that while Y'shua's body lay in the tomb, his followers were in fact, "bringing in the sheaves". By the time Y'shua was executed, thousands of Yehudim, Galileans and Israelites were singing a song like; "we shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves" which is the ultimate fulfillment of ***Sefirat Ha'omer***. The spiritual rebirth of many thousands of souls had begun, and they were now awaiting the Promise of the "Redeemer" or "Comforter", also known as the "Holy Spirit." While religious men were trying to protect their religious traditions (cash cow) by putting a seal on the stone, and a guard at the tomb (Matt 27:62-66 see footnote on verse 62), the seed Mashiyach planted had already opened the Kingdom of Heaven to multitudes of spiritually hungry souls. In

the Parable of the Sower, Matthew 13:18-30, Mashiyach explains his and our roles in this Great Harvest.

"Putting the sickle to the standing grain" also brings to mind verses like; "the harvest is great and the workers few" (Matt 9:37); "let both grow together until the harvest" (Matt 13:18-30 parable of the sower); "lift up your eyes and see the fields that are white and have ripened for the harvest already" (John 4:34); "Thrust his sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped" (Rev 14:16). All who follow Y'shua, according to the Spiritual Rebirth, are also co-labourers with Him, (1 Cor 3:9) we "labour with Elohim" to help do our part to "bring in the sheaves".

Y'shua said, "But I speak truth to you that it is better for you that I go, for if I do not go, the Redeemer will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you." (Yochanan 16:7) The Ruach haKodesh was poured out on Pentecost (*Shavuot*), also known as ***Yom haBikkurim*** (the Day of Firstfruits). The true fulfillment of "Firstfruits" is of the *spirit*, not the flesh. It is from the natural things that we learn of the spiritual, "we also in whom are the first fruits of the Spirit, we groan within ourselves and look anxiously for the adoption of sons, the redemption of our bodies." (Romans 8:23)

Conclusion of the Matter

The real power of the resurrection wasn't that Y'shua came out of the grave; that was already old news according to Lazarus. The Good News was that Mashiyach taught us and demonstrated how *we* are to become "Spiritual Beings" who will also put on an immortal body. The actual timing of the resurrection points to something far greater than the physical resurrection. The Good News is that Mashiyach showed us how to put on an immortal body, which is why he said, *"do not touch me, for I have not ascended to my Father"* (Yochanan 20:17); a widely held truth within the Household of Faith. By being in the tomb on Abib 16th, on the sixth day of the week (the number of man), Y'shua put the focus on the need for *our* newness of spiritual life in him.

Religion likes to put the focus on things like the Cross, Torah scrolls, things like foot washing, the Rapture; on days, seasons, and years, speaking in tongues, on prophecies, etc, but Mashiyach put the emphasis on *our* spiritual birth. Without the spiritual birth and growing in the righteousness of Elohim *"from faith to faith"*, we will not see our place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Y'shua appeared to his disciples on Sunday, the day after the weekly Seventh day Shabbat: The Eighth Day: time, space, matter and everything that we see with our eyes and hear with our ears is going to be transformed on that "Eighth Day." It refers to what is going to happen at the end of the Seventh Millennium, after the thousand year reign of Mashiyach; it is what the prophets spoke of, and what gets every Jew and Christian excited: The Olam Haba, the World to Come. It is a mystery (hidden thing) that is sown into the spirits of all believers, the destiny of the Ancient Path of Mashiyach.

What Y'shua taught nearly 2,000 years ago is as vital and as fresh as it was the moment he said it: *"If you love me, keep my Commandments. And I will ask of my Father and He will give you another Redeemer who will be with you forever. The Spirit of Truth, He who the world is not able to receive because it has not seen Him, nor does know Him. But you know Him for He dwells with you and He is in you."* (Yochanan 14:15-17) Clearly, our part is to demonstrate our love by choosing to obey his Commandments, to observe the Word of YHWH, which is His Torah. The promise Y'shua gives is clear, when we keep his Commandments we will also receive the "Spirit of Truth" that the world is not able to receive.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, 'You come.' And let him that hears, say, 'You come.'
And let him who thirsts, come; and he that is inclined, let him take the living water freely."
(Revelation 22:17)

Woman of John 8

Later Greek manuscripts inserted additional verses into John 7:53 to 8:11 that tell a story of a woman caught in adultery. This story does not appear in either the Peshitta or the four earliest Greek manuscripts. Most Christian scholars are honest enough to acknowledge that John did not write this. Many opine that one of John's "disciples" must have written it and inserted it later.

The KJV records verse 7:53 as: "And every man went unto his own house." The narrative is as follows:

"1. Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. 2. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and he taught them. 3. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4. They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? 6. This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with [his] finger wrote on the ground, [as though he heard them not]. 7. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9. And they which heard [it], being convicted by [their own] conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, [even] unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? 11. She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:1-11 KJV).

Why would someone insert this story into the book of John? Firstly, this narrative is a fundamental proof text for Christians to prove that Jesus forgives adultery with no consequences to the offender. For Christians, Jesus says "go and sin no more." Therefore, the woman was, in fact, guilty as charged but her sin was without consequence. If she had been falsely accused Y'shua would not have said "go and 'sin' no more." Bringing an accused person publicly before Mashiyach for judgment is extremely perverse and shameful. There is no co-accused, no husband, no credible witnesses, and we have no idea whether or not those making the charges where even the ones who caught her in the act! It is written in such a way that the reader automatically feels sorry for the victimized woman. It's impossible that the woman be judged, because the basic criteria are entirely nonexistent. In reality, Torah requires that both parties involved in adultery be brought up on charges together and in the presence of their accusers, as well as with any witnesses and the elders of the community, none of which was done here (Leviticus 20:10-21).

The statement/question that, *"Moses commanded us that such should be stoned"* is a leading question. It is not supported in Torah or rabbinical halakha under any such circumstances as recorded. Torah is explicit on the matter of casting the first stone: "*At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put the evil away from among you*" (Deuteronomy 17:6, 7). Most of the civilized world realizes that a person is to be thought of as innocent until proven guilty, and that a hearing of evidence must precede a conviction and penalties. This inserted story is extremely indecent; the author of this lore makes a serious religio-political statement that juxtaposes his Jesus hero against those bad Pharisees….

The story ends with Y'shua ducking out of a stoning by the Pharisees. Christians know that Y'shua is innocent, but the Pharisees are pictured as picking up stones in a fit of rage to kill him for not condemning the poor, adulterous woman. Christians have been taught to view the Pharisees as hard-hearted, legalistic stone throwers; however, a brief look into Christian history shows the Pharisees are a Sunday picnic compared to the pogroms and massacres of Jews at the

hands of Christians. Could it be that such an addition to the Christian Bibles contributed to anti-Semitism?

"*If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shall you put away evil from Israel*" (Deuteronomy 22:22). The value of both marriage and human life has been greatly reduced by modern Christianity, which has hardly progressed beyond the Greco-Roman legal system that spawned it. Even in matters of adultery and remarriage, most Christians accept the authority of government legislation for divorce. As Scripture says: "*…all the earth wondered after the beast"* (Revelation 13:3). In reality, Mashiyach calls his followers to a much higher standard than what earthly governments have to offer.

The story of the woman caught in adultery is a very sharp contrast to the account of "Ananias and Sapphira" (Acts 5:1-10) who bore false witness regarding a property they sold. In Acts 5, this couple lied publicly in the name of Y'shua and was struck down for making a mockery of the true Faith. The woman caught in adultery suffered no consequences; therefore, Christians theologize that she is saved, which also makes them feel better about the adultery in their own churches. Because of John 8, Christian leaders can now teach that adulterers are forgiven and need not make any restitution. There are no consequences in many Christian circles for adultery, which is why when Pastors, Priests and "Reverends" commit adultery and other evil sex crimes, they can continue right along with their "ministries" as if hardly anything happened.

"*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*" is simply theological trickery of Christianity. Every one of us is fallible and has sinned to one degree or another, but Christian theologians spin this to teach that none of us should ever judge sin. This dependency upon church hierarchy to forgive sin popularized Christianity and made the Catholic Church the wealthiest organization on Earth, because everyone knows that it's tough to go through life without sinning.

This is why it is so important to have Torah written upon the heart. The Word of YHWH offers a deep and beautiful love relationship that is nurtured between the repentant sinner and YHWH, through Mashiyach. The sinner overcomes temptation to sin by recognizing a peer group of equals (Kedoshim) who support righteousness and reject sin. When Torah is written upon the heart the soul becomes servant to Righteousness and recognizes dependency upon the spiritual body rather than the institution.

"*But I fear, or else, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his craftiness, so your minds should be corrupted from simplicity towards the Mashiyach. For if he that comes to you, had proclaimed to you another Y'shua, whom we have not proclaimed; or if you had received another Spirit, which you have not received; or another gospel, which you have not accepted; you might well have given your permission"* (2 Corinthians 11:3-4). Y'shua saves in the Name of YHWH. His name means the SALVATION of YHWH, which means the sinner must turn to YHWH and change from their sinful ways. Unlike the "Jesus" of the false church system who claims to "save" people in their sins, Y'shua taught: *"How narrow the door and strait the road that leads to life, and few are they, those that find it"* (Matthew 7:14).

Who inserted the story of the woman caught in adultery into the text? Considering the revisions, additions, adulterations and conflicts in the thousands of Greek manuscripts which surfaced since the Fourth Century, we know one thing: The story crept into the text a couple hundred years after Yochanan. Therefore, it's shameful to suggest that one of "John's disciples" did it. Many assume that it is reasonable to insert cunningly devised fables into their Bibles that support their religious traditions, yet they continue to refer to their books as "holy." This simply proves that it is often Christian tradition that has become their "holy" standard, certainly not the love of the Truth.

YHWH is Y'shua the Mashiyach

"and that every tongue should confess that Master YHWH is Y'shua the Mashiyach, to the glory of Elohim his Father." Philippians 2:11

The Spirit of YHWH, also known as the Ruach haKodesh, is both within Mashiyach and is YHWH; however, the *nephesh* (soul) of Y'shua is "the person" or vessel of Y'shua where the Spirit of YHWH dwells. The physical body of Y'shua and his soul are not YHWH, but Y'shua made himself subject to YHWH in all aspects. Rabbis have long believed that Mashiyach existed before the material universe and that everything in time and space is subject to Mashiyach. That Mashiyach existed continuously from before creation indicates a very intimate spiritual connection to YHWH, which isn't such a mystery when we consider our own spirit, soul and body.

Within every person is a *neshama* (human spirit) which is made in the *tselem* (image) of Elohim; this is a "portion" of Elohim within each of us. Each one of us has a spirit element that enables us to communicate with the Ruach haKodesh, spirit to spirit. Our mind, will and emotions decode spiritual experiences allowing us to share information about the spiritual worlds within this world system, but we also communicate with others in spiritual dimensions where we "know" or perceive certain things but don't necessarily know why. However, the stronger the spiritual elements within each of us the more resources we have to understand the nature of Mashiyach.

The "mystery" of Mashiyach can only be correctly understood within the Laws of Torah. Mashiyach is synonymous with Torah (instructions in righteousness) and the Word of YHWH is his very nature and being. Before Mashiyach came to earth as Y'shua, the Spirit of Mashiyach dwelt with YHWH as Ruach haKodesh. The Messenger (Angel) of YHWH is Mashiyach who is certainly not a created Angel, but the Arm of YHWH revealed. Mashiyach's dominion is over everything in time and space; when YHWH wills something He does so through Mashiyach. Mashiyach does what the "Mind" of his Father YHWH designs.

When a person enters into the Kingdom and is born from the beginning they desire a sinless nature. The Set Apart spirit within them guides them according to the "Mind of Mashiyach." But when did your spirit originate? Did it originate at conception? At birth? Or at your spiritual rebirth when you turned from sin and began walking in Mashiyach and being obedient to the Word of YHWH? Did not your spirit exist in the "Mind" of YHWH at the beginning of creation? The answer is: Yes, it most certainly did. When the Word of YHWH began "speaking" time and space into existence, you were part of the grand design way back then; but, in reality there is no such thing as time with YHWH so you are part of I AM. Your existence came about from outside of time, in the mind of YHWH; therefore, in a spiritual or metaphysical way, you "existed" before you were born. Your physical body and soul came along through the course of time according to YHWH's perfect design.

If we consider that we existed, even metaphysically, in the mind of YHWH before we arrived on this Earth before we were given a physical body, then we can better understand how Mashiyach could exist before creation and also appear in various "forms" through time, including his coming to Earth as Y'shua and his return as Mashiyach ben Dawid. Mashiyach appears in hundreds of places in the Tanakh as *"the Word of YHWH,"* even in a vision to Awraham (Gen. 15:1) as well as Gen. 19:24: *"Then YHWH rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHWH out of heaven;"* here it is clear that YHWH is communicating with YHWH. The Word of YHWH occurs within time and space but the Father YHWH (who is Spirit) is outside of time and space. These passages in Torah are written for our benefit to understand how Mashiyach connects us to the Father. Mashiyach is the Arm of YHWH revealed within time and space; otherwise there would be no "mediator" between us and The Father.

The word Mashiyach (anointed one) is derived from *mashach* (anointed) and, of course, Dawid was anointed by Samuel to receive the Spirit of YHWH: *"Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and*

anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of YHWH came upon Dawid from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of YHWH departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from YHWH troubled him" (1 Sam. 16:13, 14).

When Y'shua was about 30, he was anointed of the Ruach haKodesh into the office of Mashiyach. Those who put their Faith in YHWH's Mashiyach and conform their lives to YHWH through love and obedience to His Word (Torah) also become anointed "as" Mashiyach (2 Cor. 1:21, 22) to those who have not yet come to the light (John 3:20, 21). Mashiyach is the first of the firstfruits; therefore, each of us also has a unique anointing that is specific to how YHWH created us.

Within Mashiyach is Ruach haKodesh. Immediately after his anointing, haSatan tried to tempt Mashiyach which would have been completely redundant if his *nephesh* was not endowed with the power of choice, but the reason he never bit into the forbidden fruit was because his Spirit is powerful and "hardwired" to YHWH. Similarly, followers of Mashiyach don't follow a multitude to sin because we are of that same "different spirit."

In order to better understand Mashiyach Y'shua (as well as the writings of Paul), it is ***vital*** to have a Hebrew and Aramaic contextual understanding of Mashiyach. With the advent of a Greek "Jesus" throughout the text, the intended depth and clarity was lost because the Greek *Iesous* has no similarity to, and nothing whatsoever to do with, the Name of YHWH. Some might backtrack and suggest that, the Good News tells us what "Jesus" means; but this is a blind alley because Greek is still only attempting to translate a Hebrew name with all its intrinsic force and insight to begin with, and so we must turn to the original vessel to get the message! That "Jesus" means "God saves" is only a very partial translation of the Name of Y'shua. Y'shua means "**YHWH saves**" which is an extremely vital key. Every title for Deity in Tanakh is just a title, as in Elohim, El-Shaddai, etc.; but only YHWH is the ***One true authority and Name***, as opposed to the many generic titles conjured up by men. This is paramount to understanding the special messenger mentioned in Shemot (Exodus) 23:20-22 which states, *"**My Name is in him.**"*

The first unique aspect to this messenger is that the verse says "*he will **not pardon.**"* This implies that the messenger could, given the right circumstances, forgive sin; but for the fact that YHWH is saying he will not, in this instance. It is that potentiality for forgiveness of sin which sets this "messenger" above all others, for in no other case is such a clarification ever mentioned, meaning that no other messenger has this capability. In Isaiah we find many references to the fact that only YHWH can forgive sin, and yet Mashiyach is given this "Elohim-exclusive" ability as well, even as this messenger. Compare Isaiah 43:1-3, 10-13, 24-28; 44:6-7; 45:5-8, 14-17 to Isaiah 53:1-12.

The second aspect is the ***name*** of this unique "messenger." Every other messenger in Tanakh ***always*** has part of the same name with the other messengers: EL (e.g. MichaEL, UriEL, RaphaEL, GabriEL, etc.). Everyone that is, except this one, which has "**My Name**" in him. That being said, of course we know what this Name is: *"Moses said to Elohim, 'When I come to the Israelites and say to them the Elohim of your fathers has sent me to you, they will ask me, What is His Name? what shall I say to them?' And Elohim said to Moses, 'Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh [I am that I am].'" He continued, "'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, Ehyeh [I am] sent me to you.' And Elohim said further to Moses, 'Thus shall you speak to the Israelites: **YHWH**, the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Awraham, the Elohim of Yitzkhakh, and the Elohim of Ya'akov, has sent me to you. This shall be My Name forever. This is My appellation for all eternity'"* (Exodus 3:13-15).

Thus we see the linguistic link between **YHWH** and Ehyeh, both derived from ***haya*** (to be). It is also from ***haya*** that we get the simplified form of **YAH**, which is the name of **YHWH** in the Aramaic Renewed Covenant. So, when **YHWH** says "My Name is in him" He means that the "messenger" will not have EL as part of his appellation, but will be worthy of the Higher Name of **YAH.** The significance of this is obvious: *"Behold the days come, saith YHWH, that I will raise up unto Dawid a righteous shoot, and he shall reign as king and prosper, and he shall execute justice and*

*righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called: **YHWH is our righteousness**"* (Jeremiah 23:5-6 1955 JPS).

The Name is even more clearly foretold in Zechariah. Here, we are told that a certain man is *not the righteous branch but instead has the name of the branch to come*. *"Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before you are men that are a sign…"* (Zechariah 3:8a). The prophecy begins with the idea that Joshua and associates are symbolic of things to come. *"…for behold, I will bring forth My servant the Shoot"* (Zechariah 3:8b). Notice carefully, the "**servant**" is also yet to come, so it cannot be the high priest Joshua or his present company. The servant is also called the "**Shoot"** or *"little sprout,"* another word for "Branch." *"For behold the stone I have set before Joshua; upon that stone are seven facets; behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith YHWH of hosts: And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith YHWH of hosts, shall ye all every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree"* (Zechariah 3:9-10). The key element here is the part about removing all iniquity from Israel in a single day and having the world at peace, neither of which happened during the Second Temple period. Therefore, this prophecy is definitely far removed from the lifetimes of Joshua or his men.

Now we continue on to chapter six, where all is revealed: *"Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set the one on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying: "Behold a man whose name is the Shoot, and who shall shoot up out of his place, and build the Temple of YHWH"* (Zechariah 6:12). Some strenuously object that this cannot apply to Y'shua because he did not build the Temple. That is true; however, the Hebrew makes it clear there are ***two Joshuas*** involved in prophecy. The first Joshua does in fact rebuild the Temple, or at least help with its construction. Again though, after the Temple is built, sin is not removed in a single day, and this is where the second Joshua comes in. When the first Joshua is done, that is when YHWH brings His Namesake, because Joshua ben Jehozadak is not "the Branch" but only has the Branch's name. Joshua in Hebrew is "Y'hoshua" and it is only here the full glory and sweep of prophecy and fulfillment meets: *"…a messenger of YAH/YHWH appeared to him in a dream and said to him, 'Yosip, the son of Dawid, do not fear to take Maryam as your wife, for he that is begotten from in her is from the Ruach haKodesh, and she will bear a son and she will call his name Eshoa (Y' SHUA) for he will save (SHUA) His (YAH's) people from their sins"* (Matthew 1:20-21).

So it is that YHWH's name is in Mashiyach, just as it was in the messenger in Exodus 23! Notice that, ***malakh*** = messenger (angel) or messenger, ***melekh*** = king. So when Rav Shaul teaches that Mashiyach is "superior to the messengers" (malakh), it is very easy to understand why. He is superior to them because he is not just a messenger (malakh) and not just a prophet, but is instead King of Kings (melekh d'melekhim). And it is only now, with this full framework established, that we can understand what he has written: *"And gave him a name greater than all names (YAH, not El). That by the name of Y'shua (YAH SAVES) every knee should bow, of [beings] in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth; and every tongue will confess that YHWH is **Eshoa Meshikha**, to the glory of Elohim his Father"* (Philippians 2:9-11). Please read Isaiah 45:20-25.

Y'shua in the Talmud

Jerusalem Shabbat 8d--[Dan 3:25] *"Like of **son of God.**" Reuben said, In that hour, an angel descended and struck that wicked one [Nebuchadnezzar] upon his mouth, and said to him, Amend your words. **Has He a son?** He turned and said [verse 28] "Blessed be the God of Sahdrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who--it is not written, 'has sent his son', but--has sent his angel, and has delivered his servants who trusted in him."*

Daniel 3:25 reads BAR (Son) of Alaha (G-d), not "angel" – but here is a classic verse that the Jewish Rabbis and Sages twist to support their anti-Mashiyach agendas. Targums (Jewish Aramaic commentary) on the book of Daniel were never circulated among the Jewish people, in part, because they would very clearly point to Y'shua as Mashiyach by foretelling the precise time of his arrival in Jerusalem. It was through the Prophet Daniel that the magi from the East (Babylon) knew when Mashiyach ben Yoseph would arrive at Bethlehem; but rabbinical Judaism prefers to go to war against Mashiyach and the Prophets YHWH sent to His people. For example:

Sanhedrin 106a--*R. Yohanan said [concerning Balaam], "In the beginning a prophet, in the end a deceiver." Rab Papa said, "This is that which they say, She was the descendant of princes and rulers, she played the harlot with carpenters."* Modern rabbinical tradition employs evil accusation and slander against Y'shua handed down through many generations. Here "Balaam" is a code word for Y'shua. "She played the harlot with carpenters" is referring to Y'shua's mother, Miriam. Here is a prime example of *lashon hara* (the evil tongue) against Y'shua and his mother that is upheld in every "traditional" synagogue on Earth. Who are the credible witnesses that make such dastardly charges? What are their names? Where are their statements? There are none; but centuries after the fact rabbinical sages continue to plant hatred in the minds of Jews through their Talmud, which bolsters and justifies their hatred toward Y'shua and all who follow him.

When Moshe was a baby, Pharaoh was obsessed over the fact that a Hebrew child would bring him trouble; Pharaoh had heard contemporary prophets announcing the birth of a deliverer, and he wanted him dead. Herod, too, feared that a Jewish deliverer would grow up to challenge his Empire; but, according to the Talmud, it was the Pharisees who were the most threatened.

Jerusalem Taanith 65b--*R. Abahu said: If a man says to you, "I am God", he is a liar; if [he says, "I am] the son of man," in the end people will laugh at him; if [he says], "I will go up to heaven," he says, but he shall not perform it.*

Although the above was written long after the First Century, this rabbinical sentiment still persists with many souls. The Pharisee elite led people to think that Y'shua was going about *haAretz* (the Land) Israel telling people he was Elohim, but Y'shua, of course, never did this. Y'shua entered into the world through the "Seed of Woman" (Genesis 3:15) with *haMishchah* (the Anointing) of the Ruach HaKodesh. Witnesses testify that he was conceived of the Ruach haKodesh and yet born of a woman. His body and soul were like everyone else's, but his Neshama (spirit) was of, and is, the Spirit of YHWH. Y'shua knew that his soul was not Elohim: He taught of doing the will of his Father and he subjected himself to the Father; therefore, at all times Y'shua acknowledged the Spirit of YHWH within him, and not his flesh, as Elohim. This is an extremely important truth that the Pharisees are willfully ignorant of. Evidence of this Pharisaic ignorance and its direct transference into Rabbinical circles is mentioned in Yochanan:

"*Y'shua said to them, Many pleasing works from the presence of my Father I have shown you. For which of them do you stone me? The Yehudeans said to him, "It is not because of the pleasing works that we stone you, **rather because you do blaspheme and that while you are a Son of man you make yourself Elohim**!" Y'shua said to them Is it not written in your Torah that "I have told you that you are Elohim." If those people he called Elohim because the Miltha of Elohim was with them and Scripture is not able to be broken To him whom the Father sanctified and sent*

into the world you say, "You blaspheme!" concerning that I had told you that "I am the Son of Elohim" (Yochanan 10:32-37).

Notice that Y'shua is pointing out that the Pharisees have ignored their own Scripture and its testimony about what to look for in Mashiyach. He then says that his own miracles prove his halachic view correct. The Aramaic here literally reads for the Pharisaic accusation, *aytiq bar anash aibed naphshakh Eloah, or, "you, a son of man, make YOUR HUMAN SOUL Elohim"!* This is a *remez* (hint) that is not well understood, even now. The word *napshakh*, can be loosely translated as "yourself," but its true core meaning is that of "soul/life force." It is the same word as Hebrew *nephesh*. In Genesis 2:7 Adam becomes a *nephesh chaya* (living soul). He does not have a soul; rather, he *is* a soul. Taken in this context, the original accusation against Y'shua is that "you make your humanity/mortal life as YHWH," and this is something Y'shua never did! The fact is, Y'shua has clearly proclaimed the human and vulnerable side of himself all along and directly states that his *nefesh/naphsha* is mortal and will die, but Father YHWH will raise it up again.

On the other hand, because he is Mashiyach and has the Ruach of YHWH, that Ruach of YHWH can never die and gives Y'shua authority over all men, and this is what the Pharisees were really against. Y'shua then simply claims power from YHWH as His designated representative (see Daniel 7:1-13). And now, all these centuries later, neither the majority of Jewry or Christendom has any idea that Y'shua from Nazareth admitted his humanity as mortal but claimed the right of power through his Father YHWH. Instead however, the Talmudic sages echoed a familiar history with their own rabbinical spin-meistering.

Sanhedrin 67a--*For it is tradition that in regard to the rest of all who are worthy of death according to the Torah, they do not use concealment except in this case [i.e, of the deceiver]. How do they deal with him? They light a lamp for him in the inner chamber and set witnesses in the outer chamber, so that they may see him and hear his voice, but he does not see them. And one says to him, "Say to me what you said to me in private," and he says it to him. And another says to him, "How shall we forsake our Elohim, who is in heaven, and practice false worship?" If he repents, it is well. If he says, "Such is our duty and thus it becomes us to do", the witnesses, who hear from the outside, bring him to the Beth Din and stone him. And thus they did to Ben Stada in Lud, and they hung him on the eve of Pesach* (Passover).

"Ben Stada" is another code name for Y'shua. According to rabbinical tradition, the Rabbis made up a "special trial" for Y'shua in private. Because the common Jewish people clearly favored Y'shua as Mashiyach, the Rabbis knew that if they put him to trial before the people, it would have resulted in a riot which potentially could have overthrown their hierarchy. Tens of thousands of Jews were trusting in Y'shua as Mashiyach. In every village where Y'shua walked, he healed the peoples; one can only imagine how his fame spread like wildfire throughout not only HaAretz Israel but the world. Y'shua obviously was considered extremely influential, because the High Priest suggested he be put to death in order to avoid trouble with the Roman occupiers. The only way the religious hierarchy could dispose of Y'shua was to torture him and kill him without a fair trial, *before* the people knew what was going on.

Sanhedrin 43a*--And it is tradition: On the eve of Pesach (Passover) they hung Yeshu [the Nazarene]. And the crier went forth before him forty days, (saying), "[Yeshu the Nazarene] goes forth to be stoned, because he has practised magic and deceived and led astray Israel. Anyone who knows anything in his favor, let him come and declare concerning him." And they found nothing in his favor. And they hung him on the eve of Pesach. Ulla says, "Would it be supposed that [Yeshu the Nazarene], a revolutionary, had anything in his favor?" He was a deceiver, and the Merciful has said (Deut. 13:8), "You shall not spare, neither shall you conceal him." But it was different with [Yeshu the Nazarene], for he was near to the kingdom.*

Words in the brackets [ ] are from earlier editions set forth by Rabbinowicz. The Pharisees wrote about how they made up a mock trial and executed Y'shua by the authority of their tradition. Healing people in the Name of YHWH was called "magic" by the Pharisees who obviously had no spiritual wherewithal to heal anyone, and deeply resented Y'shua for having such unlimited spiritual authority. Y'shua led many Jews away from the popular Pharisaical authority of his day, teaching the Jewish people that the Pharisee elite were serpents, empty white-washed tombs. Making changes to man's tradition isn't easy, which is why Mashiyach commanded us to "come out of Her." Religious folk consequently slew Mashiyach to retain their pride, save face and bolster their tradition. Today's Christians have followed suit in these Pharisaical traditions in that Christianity has murdered Mashiyach billions of times over by destroying his Word and bringing railing accusations against the preincarnate Mashiyach, which is Torah.

Tosefta Sanhedrin *IX.7--Rabbi Meir used to say, What is the meaning of (Deut 21:23), "For a curse of God is he that is hung?" [It is like the case of] two brothers, twins, who resembled each other. One ruled over the whole world, the other took to robbery. After a time the one who took to robbery was caught, and they crucified him on a cross. And everyone who passed to and fro said, "It seems that the king is crucified." Therefore it is said, "A curse of God is he that is hung."*

Quoting Deuteronomy 21:23 and totally confusing the story of Barabbas (John 18:40) with Y'shua, Rabbi Meir justifies the actions of the Pharisaic elite putting Y'shua to death. Notice how oral Jewish tradition also puts Y'shua "on a cross," which became a popular carryover tradition. The two brothers here (twins) is a hidden code for Y'shua and his blood brother Ya'akov haTsadiq who were both murdered by the Pharisee ruling class. Note how the Talmud reinforces their own tradition, *"A curse of God is he that is hung"* that uses "God" to endorse a nasty religious agenda against Y'shua. The vast majority of Christians, too, believe that Y'shua was cursed of God, which is a very regrettable theology that originated in Pharisaism.

The religious elite were and are very intimidated when Jews put their trust in Y'shua as Mashiyach, so they invented the *Birkat ha-minim* (curse on the followers of Y'shua) in the *Amidah* (daily Jewish prayers), in an effort to force followers of Y'shua back under rabbinical authority. Ironically, the curse didn't go far. According to the Talmud (*Berakoth 28b, 29a*) a year after he had composed the prayer, Samuel the Small, the composer of the *Birkat ha-minim* who was leading the service couldn't recall the curse "*shetayim we-shalosh sha'ot.*" The rest of his Pharisee friends pressed him for two or three hours in an attempt to get him to remember, but all efforts were unsuccessful. Even so, many rabbinics over the centuries did remember to drop the final "A" from Mashiyach Y'shua's name, changing the meaning from "YHWH is salvation" to "may his name be blotted out." All those prayers to blot out the name of our Blessed and Wonderful Redeemer came to naught, rather, because of his name the Bible became by far the largest selling book on earth.

Y'shua to Zeus

While it is true that Iesous became the Greek substitute for Yehoshua (Greek Septuagint translation of the Tanakh), it is also true that the Greek language is very capable of reproducing the name of Yehoshua (Y'shua) with exact sonic pronunciation. However, an etymological link evolved between Iesous, Zeus, and Jesus, pronounced: **Ie**-soos; Zoos; and **Jee**-*zuh*s. Regardless as to whether one recognizes sonic similarities or not, there are many other factors that connect the Christian worship of Jesus to Zeus. Notice "Elizeus" in the 1611 King James Version (Luke 4:27), spelled exactly as seen here, is a name that weds the pagan deity Zeus with the Elohim of Israel. While this is clear evidence of a blatant pagan connection to Zeus worship, we've only begun to scratch the surface.

Historians have noted that for many centuries busts of Zeus were prominently displayed in many Christian churches throughout Europe – not only Catholic Churches where idolatry is a normative, but also in "Orthodox" churches. The original busts of Zeus were imported into the most prominent front and center parts of "Christian sanctuaries." Rav Shaul's letters had not been heeded by the Church. In the year 230 C.E. the Christian *"Church Founder"* Tertullian wrote: "By us [Gentile Christians] who are strangers to (Jewish) Sabbaths, and new moons, and festivals, once acceptable to God, the Saturnalia, the feasts of January, the Brumalia, and Matronalia are now frequented, with gifts being carried to and fro."

Early in Roman church history it was very fashionable to syncretize pagan worship into Christianity. One of the most evident pagan elements is the sun-child of December 25th who became the son-child of "Mary the mother of God." Ishtar, from where the fish symbol originated, was also a carry-over into Christianity, and transubstantiation is another pagan rite that was ripped right out of paganism and dropped into the Easter wafer, in which most Christians indulge.

As mentioned before, the Vatican sports a huge brazen obelisk at the center of St. Peter's square that was brought to the Church from Heliopolis, Egypt, by the Roman emperor Caligula. The obelisk is a phallic symbol (penis) that dedicates the Roman Catholic Church to sun worship in the name of Ishtar (Easter). Caligula considered himself god and demanded worship as a physical god – not unlike the Catholic Pope who postures himself as being infallible and in the place of god. The difference between modern Catholicism and paganism is mere semantics. The Catholic Church demonstrates all manner of demonic spirit that Caligula himself "enjoyed," including an abundance of extremely high level pedophile sex crimes. Those who are not Catholic, however, need not point their fingers, because every Christian who erects a Christmas tree or attends church on Sunday or celebrates Easter or Valentine's Day is blindly following Roman Catholic authority.

Y'shua Mashiyach is the government of YHWH, he is altogether Righteous, Just and Lawful, but most Christians are adamant that "Jesus did away with the Law." There is plenty of evidence that proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Mashiyach Y'shua has been utterly betrayed by the vast majority of Christianity. But the greatest "slap in the face" to Mashiyach, is that when Christians are Scripturally presented with the truth about Mashiyach Y'shua, rather than repenting and turning to YHWH, most choose to ignore Truth, and continue to follow pagan customs. Most Christians ask, "What difference does it make?" because they see no difference between the absolute Truth of the Perfect Mashiyach versus a false religious system that invented Je-Zeus according to a mixture of truth and paganism.

The distinctions of Mashiyach's government are universal and unchanging regardless of how he is personified by Christians, Jews, Muslims and all other religions. Although Christians may posture a Jesus deity according to Greco-Roman and pagan traditions, and may even give themselves exclusivity to the Kingdom of Elohim, the fact remains that Y'shua gave plenty of warnings against man's traditions when he said: *"It will not be that just anyone who says to me "My master, my master." Will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, "My master, my master. By your name,*

have we not prophesied? And by your name have we cast out demons? And by your name have we done many miracles?" And then I will profess to them that from everlasting, I have not known you. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity! Anyone, therefore, who hears my words, these, and does them, will be likened to a wise man who built his house upon a stone" (Matthew 7:21-24).

Y'shua used many parables and metaphors to bring the point across that the carnal nature of man must die so the spiritual man can live within him. There are no religious substitutes that can be given in exchange for living a righteous lifestyle *in* Mashiyach. Everyone who has put forth an effort to live a life pleasing to Master YHWH, regardless of religion, has experienced what it means to bear the infamy of truth and make war against the carnal nature; which is why Y'shua said, *"…I say to you, that unless you eat the body of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in Qnoma. And he who eats from my body and drinks from my blood has life that is everlasting, and I will raise him up on the last day. For truly my body is food and truly my blood is drink. He who eats my body and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him. As the Living Father has sent me, and I live because of the Father, and whoever eats of me he also will live because of me. This is the Bread that has descended from Heaven. It is not as manna your forefathers ate and died. He who eats this Bread will live forever!"* (Yochanan 6:53-58)

From Publication to Masorah and Liturgy: Where Do We Go From Here?

It's the text

As you've sojourned through these pages you've noticed suggestions and ideas – some gentle, some not – which dealt with a wide variety of historical and spiritual traditions that surround, or have been in opposition to, this text. You have seen critiques against Rabbinic Judaism, ancient Gnosticism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism and "Greeks in Jewish Clothing," just to name a few. However, let it not be said that one group hath escaped the sharpened quill, we of the Netzari Faith ourselves!

The fact is, there is no place on Earth, not one solitary *kehillath* (assembly) in which all the optimum requirements are being met for worship. Yes, obviously some assemblies are quite close, but all are lacking in elements which are just as critical as the ones they have embraced and adopted.

Picture this if you will: It is Shavuot, and the whole Netzarim congregation is rejoicing in the Ruach haKodesh, in Mashiyach and in the giving of Torah. As the Torah is being carried about and rejoiced over there is dancing, singing and aliyahs, blessings upon the opening and closing of the ark that contains the precious word of YHWH inscribed in the Set Apart Hebrew language. It is certainly a great honor for each of us to be part of such a community of worshippers. And then, to climax all of this, many will read from their source of ultimate halakha, the teachings of YHWH's Son, the Living Torah, from a Greek translation? And without a scroll?

What's worse, many can't even agree on which version to learn from! Is it the Greek from Western, Alexandrian or Byzantine text families? Is Matthew to be read from these or from one of three late medieval copies written in Hebrew? Are the rest of the Gospels coming from the Greek, Peshitta or Old Syriac? Or maybe we should targum by the seat of our pants, becoming "Nazarene Pentecostals" speaking in "strange tongues" and cobble together readings from a particular Semitic Buffet Line?

Can we not see the disconnect here dear brethren? Why are Scriptures treated and handled differently because of what part of the Word they come from?

Are we never to do an *aliyah* reading from the scroll that has the first five books of the Renewed Covenant in Aramaic, as we do from the five books of Torah that were given by the One True Lawgiver?

Why then you may ask, did we not put this diglot into Hebrew rather than English? As mentioned earlier it is vital that we all share in the preservation of the Aramaic language. Now everyone can see the text and analyze it for themselves regardless of their Hebrew or Aramaic language skills.

But for the Netzarim community there must be a wider purpose, even to standardize and re-invigorate the kind of Jewish learning infrastructure that existed in the days of the Shlichim when the Temple stood and in the centuries immediately following with the establishment of the Tiberian style yeshivas. For this, we must read from all Set Apart texts in a unified manner. The rabbis of the period ascertained that standardizing and stabilizing canon lists, liturgy and the readings themselves was critical to keeping their culture alive. Hebrew and Hebrew literature had to have a base which everyone agreed on, at least as a foundational starting point for scholarship and prayer. Should not this same wisdom be applied to the Renewed Covenant writings as well?

The writings of the Renewed Covenant are just as worthy as Tanakh, and should be venerated and preserved in the exact manner as Tanakh, including production by a scribal hand on animal skins and using a counting method of the letter values of each line to ensure one hundred percent accuracy. But we can't make that kind of guarantee if we don't know what the text that we are reproducing actually is!

Netzarim communities must retain their distinctiveness but also agree on the source from where that distinctiveness arises. We have all witnessed the pitfalls of having one man "reconstruct" Holy Writ according to his own whim. Do we really want to come under the scrutiny of the Master YHWH for proffering any man-made versions?

We must thoroughly examine the ancient traditions that have survived and select from them one candidate-text as standard bearer, the base text from which all other ancient variants can play off of and compare themselves to.

Where is the Hebraic Roots *text* of Mashiyach Y'shua? We know that the Greek language presents immense challenges to recovering original Hebrew and Aramaic thought, so why go through that when a well attested to ancient tradition has survived from the apostolic age in the sister language of the Torah and in the dialect in which Y'shua himself taught?

The bottom line is this, only one Semitic tradition for the Renewed Covenant has survived from the apostolic age, and for at least the 22 books of the Eastern canon, it is preserved and reproduced with an accuracy that rivals or even surpasses that of the Masoretes and their efforts on Tanakh. Otherwise we are left with a pshat in the dark!

And so, it is not so much a matter of trying to convince every Netzari soul to drop whatever text they like and never look at it again in favor of a perfect Peshitta. Rather, it is to embrace Peshitta as a starting point, irrespective of where other differences may later take us.

The whole text

Ourselves and a growing number of YHWH's people are hereby proposing that Four Renewed Covenant scrolls be added to the ark of every Netzarim synagogue, which has been delineated in this diglot as follows:

> **Scroll 1**: *Gospels and Emissaries*
> (Matthew through Acts, mirroring the Five Books of Moshe on one Torah scroll).
>
> **Scroll 2**: *The Major Testimonies*
> (Hebrews, Ya'akov, Yehuda, 1 Keefa, 2 Keefa, Romans, 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians).
>
> **Scroll 3**: *The Ten*
> (Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon, mirroring "the Twelve", or the listing of that number of minor prophets on a single Torah scroll).
>
> **Scroll 4**: *The Second Testimony of Yochanan* (1-3 Yochanan, Revelation).

As for the text itself, I trust that what has been done here would be a fair starting point. We have restored the original Eastern readings and have also rigorously checked and compared the Khabouris manuscript against the standardized 1905 Critical Edition, making suggestions for where the best readings are while preserving their alternatives. In doing so we have been honest and transparent as to what all the variants are, whether they are major or minor, and how to retain all textual readings for future study even if some feel the base text is not as precise as they would prefer for a given reading. The fact is though, we all do this with the Masoretic Text of Tanakh anyway, so why not simply be consistent? We should argue *from* the base text, not on *what* the base actually is.

In a perfect world what I would propose that the consonants of this diglot form the un-pointed "Hebrew" of the Masorah of these scrolls. Then the full vowel-pointed Estrangela Midyat text could also be transliterated into pointed Hebrew for use in prayer books, Siddur volumes and so on. All Netzarim rabbinic study, yeshiva training and halachic discussion would thus be centered

and stabilized, creating a group of scholars and teachers that would rival anything on Earth, indeed surpass anything and easily refute any anti-Mashiyach propaganda that comes our way. Again I draw parallels from the greater Jewish tradition on Tanakh. Even though portions of Esther and Daniel, along with greater commentary and interpretive bodies such as Talmud and Kabbalah are in Aramaic, they have been "pasteurized" into a unified "Hebrew" script. I put "Hebrew" in quotes because this square script is officially known as *ktav ashurri*—literally "Assyrian writing"—so it is really an Aramaic script after all.

Nevertheless, it was prudent to have one alap-beet style to rule them all, to subsume all sacred and liturgical traditions under a singular umbrella construct. And so, it is my hope that there would be a greater and wider understanding of how Hebrew Tanakh and Aramaic Renewed Covenant writings relate and are intimately connected to one another, and this is best achieved through consistency of use and application within a unified scholarly methodology.

And nothing but the text

At the same time, we Netzarim need to stem the tide away from all heretical attempts to widen or diminish our Canon. Many believers seem to be reliving the ancient controversies of not only the Rabbinic processes of determining worthy Tanakh books but on the Christian side with debating books and readings from the Councils of Nicea and Carthage in the Fourth Century. There have been attempts to "restore" to us everything from a 151st Psalm to apocryphal testaments of Enoch and other interesting, but ultimately less certain, religious literature. Certainly the exploration of wider religious literature of the period is meritorious, even through examining interpretive history of a passage of Scripture, but to view those same writings as being canonical is another matter. On the other side of the scale, there are also minimalists who would throw out the writings of Rav Shaul or who might even consign the entire Renewed Covenant corpus to something less than authoritative. They come into our communities teaching that Y'shua's words are as midrash or targum, suggesting they are restoring Tanakh foundation; but what they really are doing is emptying the literal force of the Word on issues like the Virgin Birth and even the Resurrection of their full intended power. In doing so they forget: There can be no valid esoteric or mystical interpretation that at its core overturns the basic scriptural message.

At least the minimalist's inspiration, the Evyonim (Ebionites) who opposed Rav Shaul in Acts 15 and elsewhere, are honest about their method and reasoning. They believe all that is needed is to add their version of Hebrew Matthew to the Torah and propose that Y'shua was not divine. Nevertheless, while what they believe is very objectionable, one cannot deny that they have formed their community around consistent principles that are based on their own viewpoint.

Having said that it is quite clear that those who come among us under the guise of unity and faux tolerance, to strip away the authority of the Renewed Covenant and take the true nature of Y'shua's message away, are often reacting to "the false pen of the scribe." They say "Yes we are Messianics but we don't follow Paul" or "Of course we love Torah and Y'shua haMashiyach but we think Hebrews is not Scripture," etc. Regardless of whether this is a reactionary or defensive maneuver it is spawned not by ancient Aramaic texts, but by the overwhelming barrage of revisionist anti-Torah and anti-Mashiyach theologies.

How many more ancient Aramaic manuscripts must be unearthed before we realize that our Master YHWH has preserved the witness of Mashiyach Y'shua abundantly well? Blessed Be His Set Apart Name!

Finally, we know brethren what Mashiyach Y'shua prophesied; *"…the earth wondered after the beast of prey"* (Revelation 13:3). Rav Shaul warned, *"Let no one deceive you in any way because (that day will not come) unless there previously come a defection and that man of sin be revealed; the son of perdition"* (2 Thess. 2:3). Keefa warned that ignorant and unstable persons were twisting Paul's words even during his lifetime (2 Peter 3:16). The burden is upon each of us

to defray the onslaught of religious propaganda against the faith *which was once delivered* and carefully examine and consider the closest-to-original text that we have available, right here and right now.

And as Rav Shaul pointed out: *One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Keefa"; still another, "I follow Mashiyach." Is Mashiyach divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?"* (1 Cor. 1:12-15) One individual cannot resolve this need for all our brethren, but everyone who has been called as YHWH's servants are called to unity of purpose. Rav Shaul put it this way, *"And, by the grace given to me, I say to you all: Do not carry thoughts beyond what you should think; but think with modesty, as Elohim has distributed to each one his measure of faith"* (Romans 12:3).

Baruch haba b'Shem YHWH!
Blessed is he who comes in the Name of Yahweh!

Y'varekh 'kha YHWH v'yishmaerekha,
May Yahweh bless you and keep you.

Ya'er YHWH panav eleikha vichunekka,
May Yahweh make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

Yissa YHWH panav eleikha v'yasem l'kha shalom.
May Yahweh lift up His face toward you and give you peace.

Weekly Scripture Readings (Parsha)

The liturgical reading year begins on the Shabbat (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset) following the conclusion of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles September-October).

1) **Beresheeth**: Torah: Genesis 1:1-6:8 Haftarah: Isaiah 42:5-43:10 Gospels and Emissaries: Yochanan 1:1-18	2) **Noach**: Torah: Genesis 6:9-11:32 Haftarah: Isaiah 54:1-55:5 Gospels and Emissaries: Matthew 24:36-44
3) **Lech Lecha**: Torah: Genesis 12:1-17:27 Haftarah: Isaiah 40:27-41:16 The Major Testimonies: Romans 3:19-5:6	4) **Vayera**: Torah: Genesis 18:1-22:24 Haftarah: 2 Kings 4:1-37 The Major Testimonies: Ya'akov 2:14-24
5) **Chayai Sarah**: Torah: Genesis 23:1-25:18 Haftarah: 1 Kings 1:1-31 Gospels and Emissaries: Matthew 8:19-22; Luke 9:37-62	6) **Toldot**: Torah: Genesis 25:19-28:9 Haftarah: Malachi 1:1-2:7 The Major Testimonies: Romans 9:6-16
7) **Vayetze**: Torah: Genesis 28:10-32:2 Haftarah: Hosea 12:13-14:10 Gospels and Emissaries: Yochanan 1:43-51	8) **Vayishlach**: Torah: Genesis 32:3-36:43 Haftarah: Hosea 11:7-12:12 The Major Testimonies: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13
9) **Vayeshev**: Torah: Genesis 37:1-40:23 Haftarah: Amos 2:6-3:8 Gospels and Emissaries: Acts 7:9-16	10) **Mikketz**: Torah: Genesis 41:1-44:17 Haftarah: 1 Kings 3:15-4:1 Gospels and Emissaries: Acts 11:19-30
11) **Vayigash**: Torah: Genesis 44:18-47:27 Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:15-28 Gospels and Emissaries: Yochanan 10:11-19	12) **Vayechi**: Torah: Genesis 47:28-50:26 Haftarah: 1 Kings 2:1-12 The Major Testimonies: 1 Peter 2:11-17
13) **Shemot**: Torah: Exodus 1:1-6:1 Haftarah: Isaiah 27:6-28:13 Gospels and Emissaries: Yochanan 17:1-26	14) **Vayera**: Torah: Exodus 6:2-9:35 Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25-29:21 The Major Testimonies: Romans 9:14-17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1
15) **Bo**: Torah: Exodus 10:1-13:16 Haftarah: Jeremiah 46:13-28 The Second Testimony of Yochanan: Revelation 19:1-16	16) **B'shallach**: Torah: Exodus 13:17-17:16 Haftarah: Judges 4:4-5:31 The Second Testimony of Yochanan: Revelation 15:1-8
17) **Yitro**: Torah: Exodus 18:1-20:23 Haftarah: Isaiah 6:1-7:14 The Ten: 1 Timothy 3:1-14	18) **Mishpatim**: Torah: Exodus 21:1-24:18 Haftarah: Jeremiah 34:8-22; 33:25-26 The Major Testimonies: Hebrews 9:15-22

Weekly Scripture Readings (Parsha)

19) **Terumah**: Torah: Exodus 25:1-27:19 Haftarah: 1 Kings 5:12-6:13 The Major Testimonies: Hebrews 8:1-13	20) **Tetzaveh**: Torah: Exodus 27:20-30:10 Haftarah: Ezekiel 43:10-27 The Ten: Philippians 4:10-20
21) **Ki Tissa**: Torah: Exodus 30:11-34:35 Haftarah: 1 Kings 18:1-39 The Major Testimonies: 2 Corinthians 3:1-8	22) **Vayachel**: Torah: Exodus 35:1-38:20 (If the Hebrew year has 12 months read with Parsha 23, with month (Ve-Adar), read separately.) Haftarah: 1 Kings 7:40-50 The Major Testimonies: Hebrews 9:1-14
23) **Pekudei**: Torah: Exodus 38:21-40:38 See note for Parsha #22. Haftarah: 1 Kings 7:51-8:21 Gospels and Emissaries: Acts 1:1-11	24) **Vayiqra**: Torah: Leviticus 1:1-6:1 Haftarah: Isaiah 43:21-44:23 The Major Testimonies: Romans 8:1-13
25) **Tzav**: Torah: Leviticus 6:1-8:36 Haftarah: Jeremiah 7:21-8:3 The Major Testimonies: Romans 12:1-8	26) **Shmini**: Torah: Leviticus 9:1-11:47 Haftarah: 2 Samuel 6:1-7:17 Gospels and Emissaries: Mark 7:1-23
27) **Tazria**: Torah: Leviticus 12:1-13:59 (If the Hebrew year has 12 months read with Parsha 28, with month (Ve-Adar), read separately.) Haftarah: 2 Kings 4:42-5:19 Gospels and Emissaries: Matthew 8:1-4; Luke 17:11-19	28) **Mtzora**: Torah: Leviticus 14:1-15:33 See note for Parsha #27. Haftarah: 2 Kings 7:3-20 Gospels and Emissaries: Mark 5:24-34
29) **Acharei Mot**: Torah: Leviticus 16:1-18:30 (If the Hebrew year has 12 months read with Parsha 30, with month (Ve-Adar), read separately.) Haftarah: Ezekiel 22:1-19 Gospels and Emissaries: Rom. 3:19-28; 9:30-10:13; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Heb. 7-10	30) **Kedoshim**: Torah: Leviticus 19:1-20:27 (See note for Parsha #29.) Haftarah: Amos 9:7-15 Gospels and Emissaries: Acts 15:1-21
31) **Emor**: Torah: Leviticus 21:1-24:23 Haftarah: Ezekiel 44:15-31 The Ten: Colossians 2:11-23	32) **BaHar**: Torah: Leviticus 25:1-26:2 (If the Hebrew year has 12 months read with Parsha 33, with month (Ve-Adar), read separately.) Haftarah: Jeremiah 32:6-27 Gospels and Emissaries: Luke 4:16-21 The Ten: Galatians 5:1-13

Weekly Scripture Readings (Parsha)

33) **BeChukkotai**: Torah: Leviticus 26:3-27:34 (See note for Parsha #32.) Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14 The Ten: Ephesians 2:11-19	34) **BaMidbar**: Torah: Numbers 1:1-4:20 Haftarah: Hosea 2:1-11 The Second Testimony of Yochanan: Revelation 7:1-17
35) **Naso**: Torah: Numbers 4:21-7:89 Haftarah: Judges 13:2-25 Gospels and Emissaries: Acts 21:17-32	36) **B'Haalotcha**: Torah: Numbers 8:1-12:16 Haftarah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7 The Major Testimonies: Hebrews 4:1-16
37) **Shlach Lecha**: Torah: Numbers 13:1-15:41 Haftarah: Joshua 2:1-24 The Major Testimonies: Hebrews 3:17-19	38) **Korach**: Torah: Numbers 16:1-18:32 Haftarah: 1 Samuel 11:14-12:22 The Major Testimonies: Yehuda 1:1-25
39) **Chukkat**: Torah: Numbers 19:1-22:1 (If the Hebrew year has 12 months read with Parsha 40, with month (Ve-Adar), read separately.) Haftarah: Judges 11:1-33 Gospels and Emissaries: Yochanan 3:19-21	40) **Balak**: Torah: Numbers 22:2-25:9 (See note on Parsha #39.) Haftarah: Micah 5:6-6:8 The Major Testimonies: 2 Peter 2:1-22
41) **Pinchus**: Torah: Numbers 25:10-30:1 Haftarah: 1 Kings 18:46-19:21 Gospels and Emissaries: Acts 2:1-21	42) **Matot**: Torah: Numbers 30:2-32:42 (If the Hebrew year has 12 months read with Parsha 43, with month (Ve-Adar), read separately.) Haftarah: Jeremiah 1:1-2:3 Gospels and Emissaries: Matthew 5:33-37
43) **Masei**: Torah: Numbers 33:1-36:13 (See note on Parsha #42.) Haftarah: Jeremiah 2:4-28 The Major Testimonies: Ya'akov 4:1-12	44) **Devarim**: Torah: Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22 Haftarah: Isaiah 1:1-27 Gospels and Emissaries: Yochanan 15:1-11
45) **VaEtchanan**: Torah: Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11 Haftarah: Isaiah 40:1-26 Gospels and Emissaries: Matthew 4:1-11	46) **Ekev**: Torah: Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25 Haftarah: Isaiah 49:14-51:3; 52:1-15 Gospels and Emissaries: Luke 4:1-13
47) **Re'eh**: Torah: Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17 Haftarah: Isaiah 44:11-45:5 The Second Testimony of Yochanan: 1 Yochanan 4:1-6, 2:18-25	48) **Shoftim**: Torah: Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9 Haftarah: Isaiah 9:1-6, 49:1-6 Gospels and Emissaries: Acts 7:35-60

Weekly Scripture Readings (Parsha)

49) **Ki Teze**: Torah: Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19 Haftarah: Isaiah 40:1-11 Gospels and Emissaries: Mark 1:1-14	50) **Ki Tavo**: Torah: Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8 Haftarah: Isaiah 60:1-22 Gospels and Emissaries: Matthew 13:1-23
51) **Nitzavim**: Torah: Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20 (If the Hebrew year has 12 months read with Parsha 52, with month (Ve-Adar), read separately.) Haftarah: Isaiah 61:1-63:9 The Major Testimonies: Romans 9:30-10:13	52) **Vayelech**: Torah: Deuteronomy 31:1-31:30 (See note on Parsha #51.) Haftarah: Hosea 14:1-10 Gospels and Emissaries: Matthew 28:16-20
53) **HaAzinu**: Torah: Deuteronomy 32:1-32:52 Haftarah: 2 Samuel 22:1-51 The Major Testimonies: Romans 10:14-21	54) **VeZot HaBrachah**: Torah: Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12 Haftarah: Joshua 1:1-18 Gospels and Emissaries: 17:1-9 The Major Testimonies: Yehudah 1:8-9

The **Weekly Scripture Readings (Parsha)** from Tanakh and Renewed Covenant Writings are read each Shabbat. The **Scripture Readings for Moedim** are read on and according to the Moedim (annual Feasts) of the Torah based Hebrew calendar. The original public reading of Torah began with Ezra after the Jewish people returned from the Babylonian captivity (c. 537 BCE), as described in Nehemiah Chapter 8. Originally, the Torah portions were read over a three year period; however, this was adapted to the annual cycle as seen here. Today some congregations have returned to the ancient Israelite triennial cycle of reading the Torah over a three year period, but the current practice in Orthodox and the majority of Messianic/Netzari congregations is to follow this annual cycle.

Scripture Readings for Moedim

Yom Teruah, 1st Day:
Genesis 2:1-34, Numbers 29:1-6, 1 Samuel 1:1-2:10, Matthew 1:1-21

Yom Teruah, 2nd Day:
Genesis 22:11-24, Numbers 29:1-6, Jeremiah 31:2-20, Matthew 1:1-21

Shabbat Shuvah: Weekly portion, Hosea 14:2-10, Micah 7:18-20, Joel 2:15-17, Hebrews 4:1-8

Yom Kippur, Morning:
Leviticus 16:1-34, Numbers 29:7-11, Isaiah 57:14-58:14, Matthew 27:1-32

Yom Kippur, Afternoon:
Leviticus 18:1-30, Jonah 1:1-4:11, Micah 7:18-20, Matthew 27:33-66

Sukkot, 1st Day:
Leviticus 22:26-23:44, Numbers 29:12-16, Zechariah 14:1-21, Yochanan 1:1-14, 7:1-36

Scripture Readings for Moedim

Sukkot, 2nd Day:
Leviticus 22:26-23:44, Numbers 29:12-16, 1 Kings 8:2-21, Yochanan 1:1-14, 7:1-36

Shabbat During the Middle of Sukkot:
Exodus 33:12-34:26, Ezekiel 38:18-39:16, Yochanan 7:14-36

Sukkot, Last Day:
Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17, Numbers 29:35-30:1, 1 Kings 8:54-66, Yochanan 7:1-52; 8:1-48

Simchat Torah:
Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12, Genesis 1:1-2:3, Numbers 29:35-30:1, Joshua 1:1-18,
Matthew 5:1-20

First Shabbat, Hanukkah:
Weekly portion, Zechariah 2:14-17, Yochanan 10:1-22

Second Shabbat, Hanukkah:
Weekly portion, 1 Kings 7:40-50, Matthew 12:1-13

Shekalim:
Weekly portion, Exodus 30:11-16, 2 Kings 12:1-17, Mark 7:1-11

Zakor:
Weekly portion, Deuteronomy 25:17-19, 2 Samuel 15:2-34, Luke 15:11-32

Purim Parah:
Exodus 17:8-16, Weekly portion, Numbers 19:1-22, Ezekiel 36:16-38,
Yochanan 11:45-53

Ha Hodesh:
Weekly portion, Exodus 12:1-20, Ezekiel 45:16-46:18

Shabbat ha Gadol:
Weekly portion, Malachi 3:4-24, Hebrews 13:1-8

Pesach, 1st day:
Exodus 12:21-51, Numbers 28:16-25, Joshua 3:5-7, 5:2-6:1; Luke 2:41-52

Pesach, 2nd day:
Leviticus 22:26-23:44, Numbers 28:16-25, 2 Kings 23:1-9, 21-25; Yochanan 18:28-40

Shabbat During the Middle of Pesach:
Exodus 33:12-34:26, Numbers 28:19-25, 2 Samuel 22:1-51, Luke 23:55-56

Pesach, 7th day:
Exodus 13:17-15:26, Numbers 28:19-25, Isaiah 10:32-12:6, Yochanan 20:26-31

Pesach, 8th day:
Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17, Isaiah 10:32-12:6, Yochanan 21:1-25

Scripture Readings for Moedim

Shavuot, 1st day:
Exodus 19:1-20:23, Numbers 28:26-31, Ezekiel 1:1-28, 3:12; Acts 2:1-47; 1 Yochanan 4:1-6

Shavuot, 2nd day:
Numbers 28:26-31, Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17, Habakkuk 3:1-19, Acts 20:13-16,
1 Corinthians 16:5-9

Tish'ah B'Av:
Deuteronomy 4:25-40, Exodus 32:11-14, 34:1-10; Jeremiah 8:13-9:23, Isaiah 55:6-56:8,
Matthew 24:1-3

Other Feasts:
Exodus 32:11-14, 34:1-10, Isaiah 55:6 to 56:8, Luke 16:13-17

Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh:
Weekly portion, Numbers 28:9-15, Isaiah 66:1-24, Luke 4:14-30

Shabbat immediately preceding Rosh Chodesh:
Weekly portion, 1 Samuel 20:18-42, Luke 4:14-20