

Notes: Shabbat – May 19, 2012

Start: 10 am

Order of Service:

Meet and Greet
Introduction (if new people)
Announcements
Open in Prayer for service
Liturgy – Sh'ma
Praise and Worship Songs
Message
Kaddash - Time of Prayer
Aaronic Blessing
Kiddush
Oneg

Introduction:

Last week I had mentioned an episode of a call in show – “Ask the Pastor” whereby the theme of that show developed into the topic of faith.

I had further mentioned that part of the show was anti-Torah, whereby the aspects of faith and Torah were diametrically opposed and therefore indicated that you couldn't have both simultaneously.

I went back to watch part of that episode where this discussion began. The one pastor who states that he has “a vendetta against the law” read the following passage from Galatians 3:9 – 14. This is the KJV

Gal 3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Gal 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Gal 3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

Gal 3:12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

Gal 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

Gal 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

I believe this subject is relevant in that one of today's parshahs is Bechukotai in that this is the final two chapters of Leviticus, culminating in what the outcome will be for Israel if they remain faithful and do the instructions provided in the previous 25 chapters.

When looking further at this translation, it has become clear why there is such negativity towards Torah in the church today. When reading this passage it states that Torah is a curse. Why would people do something if it is a curse?

Why would we want to be under this curse called the law?

However, when you read something like Romans 7:

Rom 7:7 Therefore, what are we to say? That the Torah is sinful? Heaven forbid! Rather, the function of the Torah

was that without it, I would not have known what sin is. For example, I would not have become conscious of what greed is if the Torah had not said, "Thou shalt not covet."

and

Rom 7:12 So the Torah is holy; that is, the commandment is holy, just and good.

In one letter Sha'ul is stating that Torah is a curse for those who keep it, while in another letter he is calling it holy, just and good.

So, which is it?

Unfortunately, the confusion continues because of how many of the translations handle the Greek word – nomos.

In the past I have talked about Sha'ul's use of the word nomos, which is the Greek word used to represent Torah and is translated as "law"

In Sha'ul's writings, several terms were used in relation to nomos, differentiating Torah from other aspects:

| Term | Definition |
|------------|--|
| Nomou | Torah / Law |
| erga nomou | meaning works of the law to represent Torah |
| nomo(s) | to represent legalism. |
| Upo nomon | translated as under the law. (meaning controlled by or in subjection to) |
| Upo nomos | under legalism |

Many of the translations have not taken these subtle differences into account. In each case, the word would be translated as law, thus creating a confusion amongst believers. When taking Sha'ul's method of writing into account, Galatians 3 reads like this:

Gal 3:9 So then, those who rely on trusting and being faithful are blessed along with Avraham, who trusted and was faithful.

Gal 3:10 For everyone who depends on legalistic observance of Torah commands lives under a curse, since it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not keep on doing everything written in the Scroll of the Torah."

Gal 3:11 Now it is evident that no one comes to be declared righteous by God through legalism, since "The person who is righteous will attain life by trusting and being faithful."

Gal 3:12 Furthermore, legalism is not based on trusting and being faithful, but on *[a misuse of]* the text that says, "Anyone who does these things will attain life through them."

Gal 3:13 The Messiah redeemed us from the curse pronounced in the Torah by becoming cursed on our behalf; for the Tanakh says, "Everyone who hangs from a stake comes under a curse."

Gal 3:14 Yeshua the Messiah did this so that in union with him the Gentiles might receive the blessing announced to Avraham, so that through trusting and being faithful, we might receive what was promised, namely, the Spirit.

As you can see from this translation, the issue isn't Torah but rather the legalistic observance of Torah. The curse mentioned is a burden or punishment, in this case self inflicted because many were being taught to keep many rules and ordinances that were not in Torah. In some cases they were instructed to keep them rather than Torah. This was the additional burden or heavy yoke that Yeshua talked about when He said:

Mat 11:28 "Come to me, all of you who are struggling and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Mat 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Mat 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

When Sha'ul was writing his letter to Rome, he stated:

Rom 10:16 The problem is that they haven't all paid attention to the Good News and obeyed it. For Yesha`yahu says, "Adonai, who has trusted what he has heard from us?"

Rom 10:17 So trust comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through a word proclaimed about the Messiah.

We are instructed in Torah to read it, to listen to it as it is read. We are to understand it and follow it.

Lev 26:13 I am Adonai your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, so that you would not be their slaves. I have broken the bars of your yoke, so that you can walk upright.

Lev 26:14 " 'But if you will not listen to me and obey all these mitzvot,

Lev 26:15 if you loathe my regulations and reject my rulings, in order not to obey all my mitzvot but cancel my covenant;

Lev 26:16 then I, for my part, will do this to you: I will bring terror upon you — wasting disease and chronic fever to dim your sight and sap your strength. You will sow your seed for nothing, because your enemies will eat the crops.

Deu 31:10 Moshe gave them these orders: "At the end of every seven years, during the festival of Sukkot in the year of sh'mittah,

Deu 31:11 when all Isra'el have come to appear in the presence of Adonai at the place he will choose, you are to read this Torah before all Isra'el, so that they can hear it.

Deu 31:12 Assemble the people — the men, the women, the little ones and the foreigners you have in your towns — so that they can hear, learn, fear Adonai your God and take care to obey all the words of this Torah;

Deu 31:13 and so that their children, who have not known, can hear and learn to fear Adonai your God, for as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Yarden to possess."

After many years of disobedience under the previous King towards Adonai, the cohen ha gadol — Hilkiyahu, finds the Torah scroll in the Temple during a time of restoration. It is understood here that it had not been used for quite some time.

2Ki 22:8 Hilkiyahu the cohen hagadol said to Shafan the secretary, "I have found the scroll of the Torah in the house of Adonai." Hilkiyah gave the scroll to Shafan, who read it.

2Ki 22:10 Shafan the secretary also told the king, "Hilkiyah the cohen hagadol gave me a scroll." Then Shafan read it aloud before the king.

2Ki 22:11 After the king had heard what was written in the scroll of the Torah, he tore his clothes.

Through his actions, King Yoshiyahu demonstrated faith towards Adonai:

2Ki 22:19 because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before Adonai when you heard what I said

against this place and its inhabitants — that they would become an object of astonishment and cursing — and have torn your clothes and cried before me, I have also heard you, says Adonai.

2Ki 22:20 Therefore I will gather you to your ancestors, you will go to your grave in peace, and your eyes will not see all the calamity I am going to bring on this place.' " So they brought word back to the king.

In the case of Israel's return from exile after her captivity in Babylon

Neh 8:1 When the seventh month arrived, after the people of Isra'el had resettled in their towns, all the people gathered with one accord in the open space in front of the Water Gate and asked `Ezra the Torah-teacher to bring the scroll of the Torah of Moshe, which Adonai had commanded Isra'el.

Neh 8:2 `Ezra the cohen brought the Torah before the assembly, which consisted of men, women and all children old enough to understand. It was the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:3 Facing the open space in front of the Water Gate, he read from it to the men, the women and the children who could understand from early morning until noon; and all the people listened attentively to the scroll of the Torah.

Neh 8:5 `Ezra opened the scroll where all the people could see him, because he was higher than all the people; when he opened it, all the people rose to their feet.

Neh 8:6 `Ezra blessed Adonai, the great God; and all the people answered, "Amen! Amen!" as they lifted up their hands, bowed their heads and fell prostrate before Adonai with their faces to the ground.

Neh 8:8 They read clearly from the scroll, in the Torah of God, translated it, and enabled them to understand the sense of what was being read.

Neh 8:12 Then the people went off to eat, drink, send portions and celebrate; because they had understood the words that had been proclaimed to them.

In both cases, it was through hearing the Words of Adonai found in Torah, that lead to a restoration of faith for the community, just as Sha'ul had written:

Rom 10:17 So trust comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through a word proclaimed about the Messiah.

Why should everyone, study and embrace the teachings found in Torah?

1. Yeshua and His talmadim were Torah observant Jews. The scriptures they studied were the Tenach.
 - Yeshua quoted from Deuteronomy more than any other book
 - As a child, Yeshua would have studied Torah and memorized it as did other Jewish children
 - When asked what the greatest commandment was, Yeshua quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 – both found in Torah
 - Yeshua's purpose wasn't to do away with Torah – Matthew 5:17 – 20
 - Yeshua instructed others to follow Torah – Matthew 19:16 – 21

If we are to be Messianic, meaning to be like Messiah, doesn't that mean we should be following His instructions?

2. Yeshua stated that the Jewish scriptures plainly testify about Him – John 5:39
 - It would be these very scriptures that Yeshua would teach from after His resurrection – Luke 24:44 – 48 and Acts 1:3
 - Through understanding Torah, we as believers realize what Yeshua did in fulfilling the requirements of the Priesthood and sacrifice for atonement that is the basis of the New Covenant

3. The very aspects of the faith professed by the church are found in Torah.
 - Shavuot is a day that the church considers to be its beginning (Acts 2), yet there is very little understanding regarding this appointed time.
 - A very Jewish beginning to what is called the church today.
 - The very fabric of Jewish believers in Messiah is found in their zeal for Torah.
4. The result of the Jerusalem council was to instruct Gentiles regarding their relationship to Torah
 - Abstain from pagan practices, listing four specific
 - Listen and learn Torah in the synagogue (Acts 15:19 – 21)
5. Sha'ul was Torah observant, having trained under Rabbi Gamaliel (Act 22:3 & 21:23 - 24)
 - He remained a Pharisee (Acts 23:6)
 - Well established in Jewish leadership (Acts 9:1)
 - Continued to lead a Jewish lifestyle in accordance with Torah (Philippians 3:6; Acts 25:7 – 8, 28:17)
 - Regularly attended synagogue in the many cities he traveled to (Acts 13, 14, 17, 19)

Many denominations profess to believe in the authority of both the Tenach and New Covenant writings, yet when it comes to study, the Tenach is left behind, used primarily to:

- Differentiate the church from Israel.
- Used as a story book

If used in its proper context by all believers, there would be no:

- Replacement Theology
- Dispensationalism
- Anti-semitism amongst believers

What many fail to realize is that the contents of the New Covenant writings derives its authority from the Tenach in totality and the Torah specifically – not the other way around. Many scriptures are used incorrectly due to lack of context and understanding of the source for which the meaning has been derived from.

More emphasis is placed on the quote than the source. With nearly 500 direct quotes and 800 indirect quotes of the Tenach, found in the New Covenant writings,

Example – Mention of a New Covenant – reference Hebrews 8 rather than Jeremiah 31:31 – 34 or Ezekiel 36

I would say it is vital to understand the source in its context to the point where we can embrace Psalm 1:

Psa 1:1 How blessed are those who reject the advice of the wicked, don't stand on the way of sinners or sit where scoffers sit!

Psa 1:2 Their delight is in Adonai's Torah; on his Torah they meditate day and night.

Psa 1:3 They are like trees planted by streams - they bear their fruit in season, their leaves never wither, everything they do succeeds.

Psa 1:4 Not so the wicked, who are like chaff driven by the wind.

Psa 1:5 For this reason the wicked won't stand up to the judgment, nor will sinners at the gathering of the righteous.

Psa 1:6 For Adonai watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked is doomed.