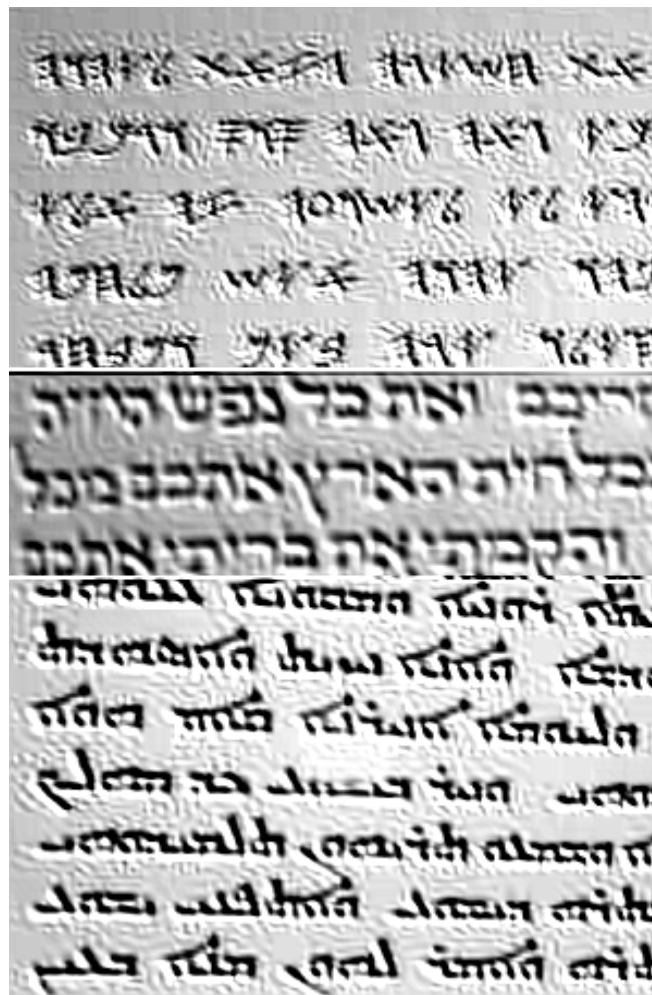


אורחא לחיא

AWRKHA L'KHAYA

THE PATH TO LIFE: UNDERSTANDING THE 18 GREATEST MISTAKES IN NEW
TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION

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אורחא דחיא

AWRKHA D'KHAYA

THE PATH OF LIFE: UNDERSTANDING THE MYSTERIES OF CREATION AND GODHEAD
FROM THE ANCIENT ARAMAIC TEXT

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בגאון אוריאל ויחא

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Introduction to Path to Life

Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the path is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those that enter by it. But the gate is small and the *path* (*awrkha*-- אורכא) is narrow that leads to *life* (*khaya*-- חיא), and few find it.

Matthew 7:13-14

Very often, the study of foreign language idioms and expressions (“figures of speech”) can lead to confusion as the person reading them in the receiving language takes the phrase literally. To see how this can happen, one need only imagine a recent immigrant to America scratching his head at phrases like “the drinks are on the house” or “the mayor gave the green light for the new project”. In fact, at least one Aramaic idiom, “on the rocks” means the opposite of what it does in English. Reason being, we would look at that expression as meaning “unstable”, such as “the banks are on the rocks”. On the other hand, an Aramaic speaker would reach the opposite conclusion by comparing it to Y’shua’s statement of “on this rock I will build my assembly, and the gates of Sheol shall not prevail against it.”

And so, in looking through the New Testament in both the Greek and Aramaic versions, I came up with a list of 18 terms and related concepts that are responsible for the greatest scriptural misunderstandings of the last 2,000 years. In my view, the fact that there are 18 of these is no accident, since the Hebrew word for “life” has a numerical value of 18, and understanding the real teachings of the Messiah surely does lead to eternal life.

First though a word about the method that I will be employing throughout this essay. My approach is to look at the full breadth and dimension of Semitic linguistics as a way to ascertain the proper meanings of the Hebraic idioms in the B’rit Chadashah. This is done by first looking at the Aramaic word used in a given New Testament passage, and then seeing how it tracks throughout the text for its breadth of meaning. Once this task is completed, then we can turn to Tanakh to find the Hebrew counterpart that best expresses the same idea. In many cases, because of the close proximity of the two languages, these words are identical.

A further advantage in using the Aramaic New Testament is that when these words from Tanakh do match up, we can be sure that the full transmission of the intended meanings is accomplished. In other words, Hebrew and Aramaic are languages that tend to have many meanings within a given phrase. However, Greek and English have the opposite trend, usually having one discrete meaning per word. As a result, when we translate a Hebrew/Aramaic phrase into Greek, confusion can often arise. Either the depth of

meaning of the Hebrew/Aramaic word is not carried over into Greek, or the way the Greek word might be understood in another context does not match up with the original Semitic intent.

Although, to use a more English based example for the sake of clarity, let us consider the word *cleave*, which has two meanings, "hold together" and "split apart". Now, if I wanted to translate that word into say French, which word in that language would I use? In some cases, context might help me to be sure, but there can also be many other readings that would not yield a definitive result either way.

In Hebrew and Aramaic, there are words that can have a dozen meanings or more, so if I say for example the word *ruach* (רוּחַ), do I mean "spirit", "wind" or "breath"? Or, if I say *miltha* (מִלְתָּה), do I mean "word", "instance", "emanation", "substance", "occurrence" or "manifestation"? *Perhaps as an Aramaic writer, John, in the first verse of his Gospel, meant all of these things, and yet the Greek redactor could only pick a phrase on his end that reflected one meaning out of a possible six!*

However, before we can get to these sayings, we need to lay a foundation with respect to the general attitude of Torah observance given to us by the New Testament writers. This is done by three basic methods:

- 1) Giving a basic vocabulary of what "Torah" and her two chief synonyms "word" and "commandment", really mean, and how they are consistently applied in the New Testament.
- 2) Looking carefully at what the New Testament teachings about the Torah as an umbrella concept really say.
- 3) Analyzing more specific instances which show direct halachic application by Y'shua and his followers regarding the keeping of Shabbat, the Great Feasts, and so on.

Part 1: The Vocabulary of Wisdom

Moving on then, let us look at our first major task.

In the Tanakh, the word "Torah" actually is better translated as "instruction" rather than "law", and what we have seen in the last 2,000 years is a massive amount of ignorance on the part of the Gentiles who erroneously sort the requirements in the Torah into a Jewish-only pile. *The fact is there is not one single reference to the Sabbath, the Great Feasts, or any other commandment in the Torah as being "Jewish law".* Instead, what we are told several hundred times is that these are YHWH's laws that are being given to the children of Israel. Furthermore, we are also told that there is only one instruction for both Israelites and

foreigners. Such a doctrinal point then dovetails well with the consistent message of the apostles that Gentile followers of Y'shua become part of the commonwealth of Israel, and are therefore subject to her laws, (Exodus 12:48-49, 20:8-11, Leviticus 24:22, Numbers 9:14, 15:13-16, Romans 11, Ephesians 2).

Another consideration that needs addressing is the way "Torah" is translated into the New Testament. In a few cases, the word in Aramaic for "Torah" is this:

For the Prophets and Torah (*aurayta*--אורייתא) prophesied until John (the Baptist).

Matthew 11:13

Or haven't you read in the Torah (*aurayta*--אורייתא) that on the Sabbath the priests in the Temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent?

Matthew 12:5

Love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All of the Torah (*aurayta*--אורייתא) and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

Matthew 22:40

This precious word, *aurayta*, is derived from the same root and meaning of "Torah". In Hebraic thought, righteousness takes two particular forms. The first one is "to shoot straight", as if morality were an archer who always hits the target. By contrast of course, to be evil is "to miss the mark". More fundamentally however is the fact that "Torah" comes from the root *aur* (אור) meaning "light", since righteousness and understanding are often thought of as spiritual light, as we see here:

Send forth Your light (אור) and Your truth; they will lead me; they will bring me to Your holy mountain, to Your dwelling place, that I may come to the altar of Elohim, Elohim, my delight, my joy; that I may praise You with the lyre, O Elohim, my Elohim.

Psalms 43:3-4

Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light (אור) to my path.

Psalms 119:105

For the commandment is a lamp. The teaching is a light (אור), and the way to life is the rebuke that disciplines.

Proverbs 6:23

Switching back over to apostolic times, and in every other place in the New Testament where Torah is mentioned, the word used there is *namusa* (נְמוּסָא), the Greek cognate being of course *nomos* (νομος). Although I will be dealing with the Aramaic usage primarily here, it is important to state that the word's duality of meaning on the Aramaic side is also evident from the Greek as well. However, unlike the Greek *νομος*, נְמוּסָא has certain grammatical rules that clearly tell us which meaning is intended. By contrast, *nomos*, while having the same meanings as its Aramaic counterpart, needs a much more intense contextual study to realize the true intent of the translator into Greek

And so, talking from the Aramaic view, when it stands by itself, as it does in Matthew 5:17, *namusa* means "Torah at Sinai" just like *aurayta* does in the other verses. Further, when conjugated as *namusa d'Moshe* (law of Moses) or *namusa d'Eloah* (law of Elohim)¹, *namusa* would still have this meaning.

However, when it is conjugated in other ways, such as Ephesians 2:15, it cannot mean "Torah". Instead, the better reading of *namusa* in that place 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 also by recording the word *dogma* for the phrase "ordinances", which can also only mean man-made doctrines. The Aramaic carries the meaning to an even clearer level though 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!

And so, to reinforce these lexical rules, we can now turn to some other instances where it is clear that *namusa* cannot mean "Torah":

Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of *namusa*?

Romans 3:27

For I joyfully concur with the *namusa* of Elohim in the inner man, but I see a different *namusa* in the members of my body, waging war against the *namusa* of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the *namusa* of sin, which is in my members.

As if these are not sufficient, here are two places where *namusa* is considered changeable or temporary:

And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the *namusa*.

2 Timothy 2:5

For when the priesthood has changed, of necessity there takes place a change of *namusa* also.

Hebrews 7:12

The next word we need to understand though is also contained in Ephesians 2:15. The word *poqda*, sometimes also rendered as *poqadona*, is the direct cognate of *mitzvah* (מצוה)², the Hebrew word used to denote the commandments of YHWH, as we see here:

Now YHWH said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the **commandment** (מצוה) which I have written for their instruction."

Exodus 24:12

The final synonym then for "Torah" is *davar* (דבר), since the Ten Commandments are literally referred to in Exodus 20:1 as "the words YHWH spoke", and it is also through the *davar* that YHWH's will for creation was implemented (Psalm 33:6). In this context then, as a spiritual command and not simply a generic word being uttered, *davar* is rendered in the Aramaic New Testament as *miltha* (מלתא), the multiple meanings of which we have just discussed.

Additionally, *miltha* is the same root as *mithleh*, or "parables", so when Y'shua talks about uttering parables (*mithleh*) unknown since creation, he is speaking from the perspective of what he was at creation (*miltha*), or the Word.³

Part 2: Walking the Halachic Path

And so, everything we are about to look at on the Aramaic side will involve either the phrases *namusa* (Torah), *poqda/poqadona* (commandments) or *miltha* (word). With those ideas then clearly in mind, let us see what the real message of Torah observance in the New Testament is, from the Gospels to Revelation:

Gospels:

And behold, one came to him and said, "Teacher, what must I do that I obtain eternal life?"

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** (*poqadona*)."

He said to him, "Which ones?"

And Y'shua said, "You shall not commit murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, honor your father and your mother and you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 19:16-19

But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of the letter of the Torah (*namusa*) to fail.

Luke 16:17

If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?⁴

John 5:46-47

For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me **commanded** (*poqadona*) me what to say and how to say it. I know that His **command** (*poqadona*) leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.

John 12:49-50

He who does not love me does not keep my **words** (*miltha*); and the **word** (*miltha*) that you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.

John 14:24

The world must learn that I love the Father, and that I do exactly what my Father has **commanded** (*poqda*) me.

John 14:31

If you keep my **commandments** (*poqadona*), you will abide in my love; just as I have kept my Father's **commandments** (*poqadona*) and abide in His love.

John 15:10

Acts:

I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city (Jerusalem), educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the **Torah** (*namusa*) of our fathers, being zealous for Elohim, just as you are all today.

Acts 22:3

I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!

Acts 23:6

But this I admit to you that I am a member of the Way, which they call a sect. I do serve the Elohim of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the **Torah** (*namusa*) and that is written in the Prophets, having hope in Elohim, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. In view of this, I also do my best to maintain a blameless conscience both before Elohim and before men.

Acts 24:14-16

I have committed no offence either against the **Torah** (*namusa*) of the Jews, or against the Temple, or against Caesar.

Acts 25:8

Brethren, though I had done nothing against our people, or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem and into the hands of the Romans.

Acts 28:17

Pauline Epistles:

Do we nullify the **Torah** (*namusa*) through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the **Torah** (*namusa*).

Romans 3:31

So then the **Torah** (*namusa*) is holy, and the **commandment** (*poqadona*) is holy, righteous and good.

Romans 7:12

Keeping Elohim's **commandments** (*poqadona*) is what counts.

1 Corinthians 7:19⁵

For I delight in the **Torah** (*namusa*) of Elohim, after the inward man. But I see a different **law** (The second meaning of *namusa*, as clarified by the next line) in the members of my body, waging war against **the law of my mind** (*noting the conjugation of anything other than "law of Moses", "law of YHWH", etc means man-made laws*), and making me a prisoner of the **law of sin** (*namusa again as "man made laws"*) which is in my members. Wretched a man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death! Thanks be to Elohim, through Y'shua the Messiah our Master! So then, on the one hand with my mind I am serving the **Torah** (*namusa*) of Elohim, but on the other, with my flesh, the **law of sin**.

Romans 7:22-25

For Y'shua is the goal⁶ of the **Torah** (*namusa*) for righteousness which is based on **Torah** shall live by that righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes that the man who practices righteousness which is based on **Torah** (*namusa*) shall live by that righteousness.

Romans 10:4-5

Owe nothing to one another except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the **Torah** (*namusa*), for this: You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and if there is any other **commandment** (*poqadona*) it is summed up in this saying: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.⁷

Romans 13:8-10

We know that the **Torah** (*namusa*) is good, if one uses it properly.

1 Timothy 1:8⁸

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says YHWH. I will put my **Torah** (*namusa*) upon their heart and upon their mind I will write it.

Hebrews 10:16/Jeremiah 31:33

General Epistles:

Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the **word** (*miltha*) planted in you, that can save you. Do not merely listen to the **word** (*miltha*) and deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the **word** (*miltha*) but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror, and after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently at the perfect **Torah** (*namusa*, and proving that "word" is a synonym for Torah as mentioned) that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.

James 1:22-25

If you keep the royal **Torah** (*namusa*) found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself" you are doing right. But if you show favoritism you sin and are convicted by the **Torah** (*namusa*) as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole **Torah** (*namusa*) and stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

James 2:8-10

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and enduring **word** (*miltha*) of Elohim. For all men are like grass, and their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the **word** (*miltha*) of YHWH endures forever.

1 Peter 1:23-25

And we have the **word** (*miltha*) of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place⁹, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from Elohim as they were carried along by the Ruach Ha Kodesh.

2 Peter 1:19-21

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our own hands have touched--this we proclaim concerning the **Word** (*miltha*) of life... This is the message we heard from him and declare to you: Elohim is light. In Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

1 John 1:1,5-6

We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His **commands** (*poqadona*). The man who says, "I know him" but does not do what He **commands** (*poqadona*) is a liar and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys His **word** (*miltha*), Elohim's love is made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him. Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Y'shua did.

Dear friends, I am not writing a new **command** (*poqadona*) but an old one that you have had since the beginning. This old **command** (*poqadona*) is the message you have heard.

1 John 2:3-7

I write to you young men, because you are strong and the **word** (*miltha*) of Elohim lives in you.

1 John 2:14

Everyone who sins breaks the **Torah** (*namusa*). In fact sin is being without **Torah** (*namusa*).

1 John 3:4

It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in truth, just as the Father **commanded** (*poqadona*) us. And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new **command** (*poqadona*) but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. And this is

love: that we walk in obedience to His **commands** (*poqadona*). As you have heard from the beginning, His **command** (*poqadona*) is that you walk in love.

2 John 1:4-6

Revelation:

Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring--those who obey the **commandments** (*poqadona*) of Elohim, and hold to the testimony of Y'shua.

Revelation 12:17

This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey the **commandments** (*poqadona*) of Elohim and remain faithful to Y'shua.

Revelation 14:12

(Y'shua said) "Blessed are those who do His **commandments** (*poqadona*) for they shall be empowered to reach the tree of life and may go through the gates of the city.

Revelation 22:14

Part 3: Charting the Truth of Torah Observance

The final part to this foundational digression has to do with looking at the Ten Commandments and the appointed feasts, and how they have been consistently applied in the New Testament¹⁰:

(Exodus 20:1-3-The 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.

(Mark 12:28-34)

One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the discussion. He realized that Y'shua had answered well, so he asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most

important?" Y'shua replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel! YHWH our 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.

(1 Corinthians 8:6)

Yet for us there is but one Elohim, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live.

(1 Corinthians 10:6-7)

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."

(Ephesians 4:5-6)

There is only one YHWH¹¹, 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.

(James 2:18)

You believe that there is one Elohim. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder.

(Revelation 19:5-10)

And a voice came from the throne saying, "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: "HaleluYah! For YHWH our Elohim, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. And it was given to her to clothe herself in the fine linen, bright and clean; 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." And I fell to his feet to worship him. And he said to me, "Don't do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Y'shua; worship Elohim, for the testimony of Y'shua is the gift of prophecy."

(Revelation 22:8-9)

And I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. 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."

(Exodus 20:4-6- The 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.

(Matthew 4:10)

Y'shua said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: Worship YHWH your Elohim, and serve Him only.

(Matthew 5:33-38)

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.

(Acts 17:29)

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.

(Romans 1:23-25)

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.

(1 Corinthians 10:14,19-22)

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?

(2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

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.

(Galatians 4:8)

Formerly when you did not know Elohim, you were slaves to those who by their nature are not gods.

(Galatians 5:19-21)

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.

(1 John 5:21)

Dear children, keep yourselves free from idols.

(Exodus 20:7-The Third Commandment)

You shall not misuse the name of YHWH your Elohim, for YHWH will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name.

(Matthew 6:9)

"This then is how you shall pray: Our Father, who is in heaven, holy is Your name.

(John 12:27-28)

"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."

(John 17:11)

Holy Father, protect them by the **power of Your name--the name You gave me¹²**--so that they may be one even as we are one.

(Philippians 2:9-11)

Therefore Elohim exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every other name. That at the name of **YHWH is salvation** (see note for John 17:11) every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Y'shua the Messiah is YHWH, to the glory of the Father.

(Hebrews 1:4)

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).

(1 John 2:12)

I write to you dear children, because you have been forgiven on account of His name.

(Exodus 20:8-11-The 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 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.

(Matthew 24:20)

Pray that your flight will not take place during the winter or on the Sabbath.¹³

(Luke 4:14)

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.¹⁴

(Acts 13:14)

But Barnabas and Paul traveled inland to Antioch of Pisidia. On the Sabbath they went to the synagogue for the services.

(Acts 16:13)

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 18:4)

Each Sabbath found Paul at the synagogue, trying to convince the Jews and Greeks alike.

(Hebrews 4:9)

For there remains a Sabbath day of rest for the people of Elohim.

(Exodus 20:12- The Fifth Commandment)

Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land
YHWH your Elohim is giving you.

(Matthew 15:3-6)

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 19:17,19)

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, "...HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER."

(Ephesians 6:1-3)

Children, obey your parents in our Master (Y'shua)¹⁵ for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

(Colossians 3:20)

Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to Our Master (Y'shua).

(Exodus 20:13--The Sixth Commandment)

You shall not commit murder.

(Matthew 5:21)

You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and
'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'

(Matthew 15:19)

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts... murders.

(Matthew 19:17-18)

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."

(Romans 1:29)

Being filled with all unrighteousness...murder.

(Romans 13:9)

You shall not murder.

(James 2:11)

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.

(James 4:2)

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.

(Exodus 20:14--The Seventh Commandment)

You shall not commit adultery.

(Matthew 5:27-28, 31-32)

"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 unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

(Matthew 19:9)

And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

(Matthew 19:18)

Then he said to him, "Which ones?" And Y'shua said, "YOU SHALL NOT... COMMIT ADULTERY."

(Romans 2:22)

You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

(Romans 13:9)

You shall not commit adultery.

(James 2:11)

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

(2 Peter 2:14)

Having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children.

(Revelation 2:22)

Behold, I will throw her into a coffin¹⁶, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

(Exodus 20:15--The Eighth Commandment)

You shall not steal.

(Matthew 19:17-18)

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 15:19)

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts... thefts.

(Romans 2:21)

You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?

(Romans 13:9)

You shall not steal.

(Ephesians 4:8)

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.

(Exodus 20:16--The Ninth Commandment)

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

(Matthew 19:17-18)

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 15:19)

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts... false witness, slanders.

(Colossians 3:9)

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices.

(Exodus 21:17--The 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.

(Luke 12:15)

Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

(Romans 7:7)

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 13:9)

You shall not covet.

(Colossians 3:5)

Put to death...greed, which is idolatry.

(Galatians 5:19-21)

The fruits of the sinful nature 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.

(James 4:2)

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.

(Exodus 12:1-28--The Passover)

Now YHWH gave the following instructions to Moses and Aaron while they were still in the land of Egypt: "From now on, this month will be the first month of the year for you. Announce to the whole community that on the tenth day of this month each family must choose a lamb or a young goat for a sacrifice. If a family is too small to eat an entire lamb, let them share the lamb with another family in the neighborhood. Whether or not they share in this way depends on the size of each family and how much they can eat. This animal must be a one-year-old male, either a sheep or a goat, with no physical defects. "Take special care of these lambs until the evening of the fourteenth day of this first month.

Then each family in the community must slaughter its lamb. They are to take some of the lamb's blood and smear it on the top and sides of the doorframe of the house where the lamb will be eaten. That evening everyone must eat roast lamb with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast. The meat must never be eaten raw or boiled; roast it all, including the head, legs, and internal organs. Do not leave any of it until the next day.

Whatever is not eaten that night must be burned before morning. "Wear your traveling clothes as you eat this meal, as though prepared for a long journey. Wear your sandals, and carry your walking sticks in your hands. Eat the food quickly, for this is YHWH's Passover. On that night I will pass through the land of Egypt and kill all the firstborn sons and firstborn male animals in the land of Egypt. I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt, for I am YHWH! The blood you have smeared on your doorposts will serve as a sign. When I see the blood, I will pass over you.

This plague of death will not touch you when I strike the land of Egypt.

"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 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. Only bread without yeast may be eaten from the evening of the fourteenth day of the month until the evening of the twenty-first day of the month. During those seven days, there must be no trace of yeast in your homes. Anyone who eats anything made with yeast during this week will be cut off from the community of Israel. These same regulations apply to the foreigners living with you, as if they had been born among you. I repeat, during those days you must not eat anything made with yeast. Wherever you live, eat only bread that has no yeast in it."

Then Moses called for the leaders of Israel and said, "Tell each of your families to slaughter the lamb they have set apart for the Passover. Drain each lamb's blood into a basin. Then take a cluster of hyssop branches and dip it into the lamb's blood. Strike the hyssop against the top and sides of the

doorframe, staining it with the blood. And remember, no one is allowed to leave the house until morning. For YHWH will pass through the land and strike down the Egyptians. But when he sees the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe, YHWH will pass over your home. He will not permit the Destroyer to enter and strike down your firstborn. "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 Moses and Aaron.

(Mark 14:12-16)

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.

(Luke 2:41)

Every year Y'shua's parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival.

(John 2:13)

It was time for the annual Passover celebration, and Y'shua went to Jerusalem.

(Acts 20:6)

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.

(Hebrews 11:28)

It was by faith that Moses 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.

(Leviticus 23:15-21--The 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."

(John 5:1)

Some time later Y'shua went up for a Feast of the Jews.¹⁷

(Acts 2:1)

On the day of The Feast of Weeks, seven weeks after Y'shua's resurrection, the believers were meeting together in one place.

(Acts 20:16)

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.

(1 Corinthians 16:8)

In the meantime, I will be staying here at Ephesus until the Festival of Weeks.

(Leviticus 23:27-32--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."

(Matthew 6:16-18)

"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.¹⁸

(John 7:1-6,10)

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.

(Acts 27:9)

Much of the time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because now it was after the Fast.

(Leviticus 23:39-43--The 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."

(John 7:1-10)

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. The world can't hate you, but it does hate me because I accuse it of sin and evil. You go on. I am not yet ready to go to this festival, because my time has not yet come." So Y'shua remained in Galilee. But after his brothers had left for the festival, Y'shua also went, though secretly, staying out of public view.

(Numbers 6:1-5--The Nazirite Vow)

Then YHWH said to Moses, "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.

(Luke 1:13-15)

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 John. 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 Holy Spirit, even before his birth.

(Acts 18:18)

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 21:18-26)

The next day Paul went in with us to meet with James, 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 Moses 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 Moses. 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.

(Genesis 17:7-14--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. Yes, I will give all this land of Canaan to you and to your offspring forever. And I will be their Elohim. "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."

(Luke 2:21-24)

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 Moses 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."

(Acts 16:1-5)

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.¹⁹

The 18 Terms

Now that we have seen then the general attitude of Torah observance that is consistently applied throughout the New Testament, let us move on to the terminology that is so often confused in traditional Christianity, apart from this clear foundation.

#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

Now, taking this verse at face value, we can easily see one thing clearly: Destroying and fulfilling the Torah cannot be the same thing. Reason being, the text is definitely 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. Or think of it this way: It would make no sense if I said to you, “I did not steal from the man, but I only robbed him instead.”

As basic as that type of example sounds however, mainstream Christianity has made just such a ridiculous assertion. They say here that Y'shua did not come to destroy the Torah, and then say that “fulfilling the Torah” must mean it is no longer necessary, i.e. destroyed!

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

So that you might know the *d'amla (complete--מלא)* 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--מלא)* in grace and truth.

John 1:14

The words which You have given me I have given them, and they received them, and understood *d'amla (completely--מלא)* that I came forth from You, and they believed that You did send me.

John 17:8

It is this last verse that perhaps drives my point home the strongest, for 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

This is the exact same word that Y'shua used, but for a slight dialectical difference in accent and, as the reader can see, nowhere is there a context that the command passes 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 it was intended to be. It is also worth noting that there are about 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 that a prophecy was meant to be carried out in precisely this or that way. 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 dictated in prophecy. Now, if the “fulfillment” has not quite 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 my words shall not taste death”!

#2: Destroying the Torah

So, if keeping or vindicating Torah is true meaning of “fulfill”, what then about “destroy”? Actually "destroying the Torah" can be equivalent to the phrase we have in English of "breaking the law", which is to say that the broken law is not made null and void by the criminal who went against it.

Technically however the Aramaic word Y'shua uses does not mean "destroy" at all, but rather "to loosen", "release" or "unravel". Let's see a few more 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*--אשרא)? Barabbas or Y'shua, who is called the Messiah?

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*--אשריך) and I have the authority to crucify you?"

John 19:10

And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been **let loose** (*d'neshtarea*--נשתרא) if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Acts 26:32

Obviously none of these verses contain 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 see the other better meaning for our Western minds is "release".

Furthermore, on the Tanakh side, there are quite a few words that have this same meaning. Here is my favorite:

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 interesting 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 shaped as a plus sign. When speaking this sign, the Hebrew speaker is literally 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.

And so, after 2000 years, we can finally restore the original meaning of this verse in Matthew:

“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 Torah:

Before showing the obvious New Testament verses on the subject, let us see the word used as "under" in the Tanakh:

They should collect all the food of the good years that are coming and store up the grain **under** (*tachath*--תַּחַת) 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*--תַּחַת) 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 that I have 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, which is a doctrine 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 laws.***" 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

These are just two of the dozens of other possible examples of this same idea. All the requirements in the Torah are not "Jewish" or even just "for Israel". Rather, they are YHWH's requirements, and it is from YHWH, and not the Torah, that justification for doing the right things comes from.

In other words, if you just naturally happen to do a ritual commanded in Torah out of blind luck or because it seems trendy or cool, then by the Torah you are 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

Now why is this? Didn't circumcision justify all these people? According to Jeremiah, the answer is an eerily familiar (can you say Acts 15?) NO! Let's hear more of this reasoning from some of the other prophets:

Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to Me. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts My soul hates.²⁰ 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. Your 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

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 New Testament over and over again. The message, in each case, is the same. Abraham did a ritual, not because it seemed a nice thing to do, but 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.

So, what is it then to be "under the Torah"? Well, put simply, "under the Torah" is not something that happened during Messiah'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 though that Cain's offering was not accepted because it was from grain, whereas Abel gave meat. The fact is, both grain and 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", or that by simply going through the motions of the ritual he would be 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 the Baptist 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

Now, obviously Y'shua's frequent rebukes on this same idea hardly need to be laid out exhaustively here. It is enough then to simply say that the Baptist did not want the Pharisees to boast in rituals or lineage alone, 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*--תַּחֲיִית) the Torah, will be judged by the Torah .

Romans 2:12²¹

To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are **under** (*tachyt*--תַּחֲיִית) the Torah, as under the Torah though not being myself **under** (*tachyt*--תַּחֲיִית) the Torah, so that I might win those who are **under** (*tachyt*--תַּחֲיִית) the Torah, to those who are without Torah, as without Torah, though not being without the Torah of Elohim, but in the instruction of Messiah, so that I might win those who are without the Torah.

1 Corinthians 9:20-21²²

If the word תַּחֲיִית looks familiar, it should. It is simply the Aramaic cognate of the word תַּחַת 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 check the other 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*--תַּחֲיִית) to the Torah.

Galatians 4:4

Now, except for substituting non-sacred names, this is the way George Lamsa reads the verse, and I must say, I heartily agree with him. Instead of merely rendering תַּחֲתַי "under" again, Lamsa has correctly surmised that תַּחֲתַי can read better his as "being subject to the Torah", which is an efficient way of bringing on the Tanakh understanding of תַּחֲתַי as referring 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 though (Romans 7:12) but rather that the Torah tells us what sin is (Romans 7:7-9). Let's continue this thought a little further then:

To redeem those who were **under** (*tachyt*--תַּחֲתַי) 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 Messiah, ***excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise***, without hope and without Elohim in the world. But now in Messiah Y'shua, you who were far away have been brought near through the blood of Messiah.

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 the 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 we have been discussing for "under the Torah" apply here also. The reason for the slight repetition though is two-fold.

First, "justified by the Torah" 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 second, 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

We will look at a parallel passage in Galatians on this idea with the next pair of terms we are about to discuss.

#5: Curse of the Torah

The first fact to establish has to do with Scriptures not usually taught in church:

And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will **curse** (*kelawlaw--קלל*)²³. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Genesis 12:3

You will receive a **curse** (*kelawlaw--קלל*) 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

Now, just at the most basic level, we can see the huge import of these verses. Since everyone agrees that the Torah was not invalid during "Old Testament times", it is crystal clear then that the "curse of the Torah" is not one that causes Torah itself to pass away! Nor was it tenable to suggest the idea of a curse something that was dreamed up by the apostles, who were allegedly trying to divorce themselves from their own Hebraic roots. With these ideas in mind, let us turn to a more familiar place:

All who rely on observing the Torah of Moses 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 we will be going 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 instead remained in force during the many centuries since the passages in Genesis, Deuteronomy and Joshua were written.

In addition, if the authority of the Torah is being undermined in Rav Shaul's day, it seems very odd that he would quote almost verbatim from this same "obsolete" source!

Clearly no one is justified before Elohim by the Torah, because the righteous will live by faith.

Galatians 3:11

Again, it seems odd that, if Rav Shaul says no one is justified by the Torah, that he still quotes from the Torah, or, more specifically, Habakkuk 2:4. Rav Shaul is still then simply repeating what was said before, that ritual is empty without the context of knowing that the requirement came from YHWH, and that our observance is based on YHWH's will, not what is trendy with 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.

Messiah 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

Now, in order to understand this part properly, let us see 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 way Messiah "becomes a curse for us" is by offering his life on the stake, and allowing himself to die in the manner of criminals, which is a requirement of Tanakh:

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.

Psalms 22:14-18²⁴

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

Now let us conclude this portion of Galatians:

He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Messiah Y'shua, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Galatians 3:14

"the promise of the Spirit" is simply that YHWH spoke to Abraham, and when Abraham did what he was told, 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 Moses was simply another step in a lengthy promise which was working itself out for centuries prior to Moses 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 the idea that Torah shows us what sin is and sets a standard of perfection that we cannot meet, incurring the death penalty. However, the Tanakh also points to a time of reckoning when those who are dead will awake to everlasting life or everlasting contempt, (Daniel 12:1-10). It was the curse of the Torah that laid them all in their graves, (Ezekiel 18:4), but the hope of eternal life is there as well, even though we do not deserve it. That eternal life however, comes from Y'shua's sacrifice on the cross, and we show gratitude by keeping his commandments, for as Rav Shaul says elsewhere:

Do we then nullify the Torah through faith? Not at all! Rather, we establish the Torah.

Romans 3:31

#6: Works of the Torah

Now a common place where "works of Torah" appears in English translations is in the same Galatians 3:10 we just showed. However, I prefer the phrase "those who rely (only) on observance of the Torah of Moses". In other words, the verse really means that "works of the Torah" are standing alone, without a faith-based context to sanctify the ritual. Other key verses though that we need to look at are here:

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His sight by **works** (עבדה--*abdeh*) 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** (עבדה--*abdeh*) 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*--עבִדָּה) of the Torah, because by the works of the Torah no man shall be justified.

Galatians 2:16

Now let me start with the last verse, which contains a statement that most Christians simply gloss over. Here Rav Shaul is appealing 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 עבִדָּה and it has an interesting etymology. You see עבִדָּה can also be personified, turning the meaning into "servant" or even "slave", as we see here:

Paul, a **servant** (*abdeh*--עבִדָּה) of Messiah Y'shua, called to be an apostle and set-apart for the Gospel of Elohim.

Romans 1:1

Paul and Timothy, **servants** (*abdeh*--עבִדָּה) of Y'shua the Messiah.

Philippians 1:1

Ya'akov, a **servant** (*abdeh*--עבִדָּה) of Elohim and of our Master, Y'shua the Messiah.

James 1:1

Therefore, the teaching in a sense is not to be a slave to 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, again going line by line:

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Y'shua the Messiah was publicly portrayed as crucified?

Galatians 3:1

We need to 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

And so, 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 look at the next line:

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

Galatians 3:2-3

Here we see the much touted but little understood concept Rav Shaul returns to dozens of times. No one, neither Jew nor Gentile, ever became righteous by doing the Torah. Instead, they came to the decision to do Torah by some form of 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--עבדה*) of the Torah, or by hearing with faith?

Galatians 3:4-5

It is important to note though 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

And here we see the climax of Rav Shaul's argument. Abraham heard the voice of YHWH, recognized that voice as the one true Elohim, and then, by obeying that voice, had that 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 Messiah, 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 Messiah, 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 though have always been aroused by Torah in the sense that in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve came to know sin when they covered 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:

So then, the Torah is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

Romans 7:12

Notice also that the "old way" was the Pharisees obeying the "letter of the Torah", but this is not an indictment against Torah, for even Y'shua said that Torah was fine, but that we had to look to its heart and spirit to do it properly:

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.

John 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 Messiah.

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 here that 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 around it 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 the faith behind the rituals that really counts.²⁵

#8: End of the Torah

This phrase is really one of my favorites, as the issue is equally apparent both in Aramaic and in Greek. First let us look at the verse in question:

Messiah is the **end** (*telos*--τελος) of the Torah, so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Romans 10:4 (NIV)

Now, looking at this from the perspective of the Greek text, the NIV really mangles this passage. Reason being, while it is true that *telos* can mean, "end", it is very irresponsible to render it that way due to the flexibility of that term in the receiving language. For example, even in English, "end" has two meanings. The first, and the one the NIV people hope everyone assumes is correct, is "termination", as this is the majority usage of the word in English.

However, we also have phrases that speak to a different meaning, such as "the *ends* do not justify the means". In that case, the lesser-used meaning is that of "goal", and this makes much more sense in both Greek and English. Since Rav Shaul has clearly called the Torah itself "perfect, righteous and good" (Romans 7:12), it is then inconceivable that he would turn around three chapters later and talk about Torah "terminating".

Instead, and as Rav Shaul clearly teaches in Galatians 3, Torah is the true tutor that instructs people on the signs of how to identify the Messiah. Then, when Messiah fulfills those signs, he becomes the Torah's *goal*. This is also one of the many meanings behind the cryptic remark in John 1, calling Y'shua the "Word

(Torah) made flesh". By extreme contrast though, this translation of Romans 10:4 then makes it sound like Rav Shaul is train conductor calling out a stop--"End of the Torah! Everyone get off!"

Furthermore, in certain key New Testament passages, *telos* can only mean "goal".²⁶

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*--τελος) is eternal life.

Romans 6:22

The **goal** (*telos*--τελος) 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*--τελος) of your faith the salvation for your souls.

1 Peter 1:9

Now in Aramaic, we find with the same verses a much clearer reading as "goal" with word *saka* (סכא). Like *telos*, context and experience are the key to realizing the intended meaning, and so if Rav Shaul continually upheld Torah in every way (Romans 3:31), as we have seen throughout this section, only "goal" makes sense. Otherwise, we have Romans 10:4 standing against a sea of Scripture that opposes it, and the Scripture cannot be broken.

[#9: My Word/Commands/Commandments](#)

Another erroneous idea is that Y'shua left us "his commandments" to follow, but that these are somehow different commandments than the ones in the Torah. The same idea also applies to the synonyms we discussed earlier, namely "commands" and "words". Since we established the Aramaic foundation for these same concepts earlier, we do not need to show the linguistics here again. Although, it is prudent to look at a few verses that are sometimes twisted out of context:

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Matthew 24:35

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

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.

John 15:7

This is my commandment: That you love one another, as I have loved you.

John 15:12

However, the truth of the matter is that Y'shua's words, commandments, and commands, were not really new. Here we see Y'shua actually turning to Torah as the validating source of his teachings:

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 Moses 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 Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

John 5:39-47

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

My teaching is not my own, but His who sent me.

John 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.

John 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.

John 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.

John 14:24

#10: A New Commandment

A variant on the above idea is the "new commandment", as a kind of sudden New Testament enlightenment that was not possible in those old Torah times. Once again though, Scripture begs to differ. As with the previous topic, I will start by showing 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.

John 13:34

Now let us stop and think for a moment. Are we now to believe that the Torah, in all its writings, has no commands for people to love one another? This was a brand new idea just 2,000 years ago? Really? Well, if so, explain these:

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 then, this is not really a "new commandment" in the sense of it never having been given before.

Rather, it is clear that "new commandment" means it is the first time that Y'shua is giving this particular

teaching to his apostles! Let's see the other 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 John 1:5-6

What else can "His commands from the beginning" be other than Torah? Finally, the apostle John makes an even clearer statement on how new commands are really old ones:

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 John 2:7-8

Going a little deeper, what we see is that the commands have been with us from the beginning, but their highest and truest understanding has only come from Messiah, who is 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 Moses, and grace and truth came through Y'shua the Messiah.²⁷

John 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 John 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 Messiah.

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 Messiah, 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 Messiah 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: Regulations of Commands in his Commandments is abolished/Nailed to the Cross](#)

Our first task is to review something I wrote earlier, and then we will look at some other passages:

*However, when it is conjugated in other ways, such as Ephesians 2:15, it cannot mean "Torah". Instead, the better reading of namusa in that place 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 also by recording the word dogma for the phrase "ordinances", which can also only mean man-made doctrines. The Aramaic carries the meaning to an even clearer level though 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!

Now let us go a little deeper into this critical piece 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

Syaga means "fence", and if that sounds familiar, it should:

Moses 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* for the Torah.

Mishnah, Pirkei Avot, 1:1

The spiritual forebears of the rabbis of the Mishnah were none other than the Pharisees themselves!

Therefore, the *fences* being talked about are man made regulations that restrict access to the Torah:

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.

John 10:1-4,7

The word *tarea* can mean "door" but its most specific meaning is "sheep gate" or *fence* as well! So while the Pharisees and later rabbis lock the Torah up behind a *fence*, Y'shua is the shepherd *who swings the gate open*, letting everyone in!²⁸

Now let's look at the other passage that also gets twisted out of context in this regard:

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 cross.

Colossians 2:14

At the risk of sounding overly repetitive, the same man who wrote that the Torah is holy just and good cannot be referring then to the Torah as the "certificate of debt nailed to the cross." More fundamentally however, we have this:

εσχάλειψα το; καθς ηρμω'ν χειρος γραφον τοι'δος γμασιν οφ; η'ν υφ' πεναντις ον ηρμι'ν, και; αυς το; η'ρκεν εκ του' μες σου προσηλωσας αυς το; τω' σταυρω'.

ועשא בפוקדנוהי שטר חובין הו דאיתוהי הוא סקובלן ושקלה מן מצעתא וקבעה בזקיפה

Now for those of you out there who cannot read Aramaic or Greek, perhaps my point is not as clear as it could be. Allow me to help then a little bit more. Throughout this essay, we have seen that two Aramaic words (*aurayta*--אורי־תא; *namusa* נמוסא) and one Greek word (*nomos*--νομος) have been the cognates used in the New Testament for the word "Torah" as mentioned in Tanakh. And so, even if you cannot read any of these languages, I issue you a challenge anyway: Try and match letter for letter any of these words in the above texts.

If after a few minutes you've become weary, there is a good reason: None of the words that mean "Torah" appear in either the Greek or the Aramaic version of Colossians 2:14! And so, "Torah" is not meant, because "Torah" never appears!

So what then is "the certificate of debt"? To answer, let me show the Aramaic text with a slightly highlighted difference:

ועשא בפוקדנוהי שטר **חובין** הו דאיתוהי הוא סקובלן ושקלה מן מצעתא וקבעה בזקיפה

The word in red is *khawbayn*, and it 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." Interesting to note, half the Greek texts read "debt" and the other half "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* (חובי) remains."

And so, the certificate of our debts is simply a record of all the transgressions that we have generated throughout our lives. The Torah tells us what those sins are, but what Y'shua did was take the *transcript of those sins* and nails those to the cross! This act of mercy then leaves us in the same position as the adulteress in John 8, who was pardoned by Y'shua not because she was innocent, but because her accusers had fled. Then Y'shua, who knew she was guilty, could have judged her as the Son of Man, but let her go because he followed the Torah principle that demanded two witnesses establish her guilt (Deuteronomy 17:6, 19:15). We notice also that she does not exactly get a free pass to do whatever she pleases because Y'shua adds, "Go now, and sin no more."

So when we are guilty of sin, YHWH is one witness to that guilt, and the record that is generated of that sin is another. However, with the reconciliation of Y'shua on the cross dying in our place, that second witness/record against us is obliterated, and the Torah remains simply to guide us in the path of righteousness for the rest of our redeemed lives.²⁹

#12: Things Pertaining to the Torah

However, perhaps the strongest Scriptural passage that anti-Torah forces turn to for justification is right here:

But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels *pertaining to the law* (*nomikos*-νομικός), 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)

Well that seems pretty clear! The Greek word *nomikos* is derived from *nomos*, and most certainly means "things pertaining to the Torah". So, up until now, while we have seen the Aramaic and the Greek pretty much agreeing word for word, in this case I am forced to part company from the Zorban redaction³⁰, and come out and say that the Aramaic has the better reading:

מן בעתא דין סכלתא ומן תשעיתא דשרבתא ומן חרינא ומן תכתושא
דספרא אשתאל יותרן גיר לית בהין וסריקן אנין מן גברא הרסיוטא מן בתר חדא זבן
ותרתין דמתרא אנת לה אשתאל ותרית ידע דמן דהכנא הו מעקם הו וחטא והו חייב נפשה

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*). As such, this verse is prime example of how attacking a small group of heretics was misapplied to the entire Jewish people. The "scribes" here that Paul mentions are actually two groups. First, there are "the scribes and the Pharisees" so frequently mentioned in the Gospels, who denied Y'shua's claims outright. These scribes are also rebuked in Galatians 3 and 4 for putting fences around Torah.

Another type of "scribe" that fits this description and rebuke are the Evyonim, or Ebionites. These were Pharisees who accepted Y'shua as Messiah but ultimately rejected any 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 Nazarene Messianic movement and threw out all of the early books of the New Testament canon except for a mutilated version of the Gospel of Matthew, that they heavily edited.

Both groups were very well known for their mastery of Hebrew and Aramaic, and therefore the term "scribe" is very appropriate here.

#13: Grace and Torah

Moving on to a very common misconception, let us explore the typical Christian idea that "grace" is something that only came with Messiah's advent. Prior to this time, many Christians allege, we were under an "age of law", which has now become obsolete by yielding to the "age of grace".

The fact is though, *we have always been under grace, and the "under the law" teaching, as we saw earlier, is a doctrine that has never been true!* However, when this bad doctrine comes up, it usually involves this passage of Scripture:

For the Torah was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Y'shua the Messiah.

John 1:17

And so, many will say that "grace" was only made manifest through the birth of Messiah. The only problem is, John himself is a strong witness against this idea!

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.

John 1:1-2,14

So we see here that Y'shua's origins are before Moses. In fact, as the Word, his origins are from before all humanity (Micah 5:1-2). Furthermore, the promises that relate to the Messiah go all the way back to the book of Genesis, since 49:10 tells us the scepter will not depart from Y'shua's tribe of Judah.³¹ 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 cross.

More fundamentally against this idea though, is the matter of linguistics. Put simply, the advantage of an Aramaic New Testament is that its terminology is very easy to correlate with the Torah written in its sister language of Hebrew. In many cases, the words are exactly the same, as we see here with respect to one term that means "grace" or "mercy":

Anyone who rejected the Torah of Moses 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.

James 2:12-13

As we can easily see, "grace" could also be a valid reading of these verses, and the 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

Now I hope these pairs of quotes will be sufficient to my point here because on the Tanakh side there are almost 40 passages with *rakhem* as "mercy", "grace" or "compassion" as the intended meaning. There are also several synonyms to *rakhem* that have at least as many references that I could throw up on to a bunch of pages if I had to. Additionally, on the New Testament side, *rakhem* is the overwhelming word of choice for "grace" appearing more than almost 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.

#14: Praying in the Name of Y'shua

Sometimes in our search for the truth, appearances can be deceiving. I can think of no better example of this idea from my own walk than this particular issue. Reason being, here is a situation where we have dozens of passages that appear to say the same thing, so how could anyone think otherwise? In fact, it is a

foundational concept in Christianity that they must pray in "the name of Jesus"³², and their case appears extremely strong when we consider the following.

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

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

"***The name of Jesus*** has healed this man – and you know how lame he was before. Faith ***in Jesus' name*** has caused this healing before your very eyes.

Acts 3:16

Let me clearly state to you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed ***in the name and power of Jesus Christ*** from Nazareth, the man you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead.

Acts 4:10

Send your healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done ***through the name of your holy servant Jesus.***"

Acts 4:30

The council accepted his advice. They called in the apostles and had them flogged. Then they ordered them never again to speak in the ***name of Jesus***, and they let them go. The apostles left the high council rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus.

Acts 5:40-41

But now the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the ***name of Jesus Christ***. As a result, many men and women were baptized... The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them, for they had only been baptized in the ***name of the Lord Jesus***.

Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus. Barnabas also told them what the Lord had said to Saul and how he boldly preached *in the name of Jesus* in Damascus.

Acts 9:27

So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the *name of Jesus Christ*. Afterward Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.

Acts 10:48

This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and spoke to the demon within her. "I command you *in the name of Jesus Christ* to come out of her," he said. And instantly it left her.

Acts 16:18

As soon as they heard this, they were baptized *in the name of the Lord Jesus*.

Acts 19:5

A team of Jews who were traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits tried to use the *name of the Lord Jesus*. The incantation they used was this: "I command you by Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!"

Acts 19:13

The story of what happened spread quickly all through Ephesus, to Jews and Greeks alike. A solemn fear descended on the city, and *the name of the Lord Jesus* was greatly honored.

Acts 19:17

Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ* to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:30

We are writing to the church of God in Corinth, you who have been called by God to be his own holy people. He made you holy by means of Christ Jesus, just as he did all Christians everywhere – whoever calls upon *the name of Jesus Christ*, our Lord and theirs.

1 Corinthians 1:2

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified *in the name of the Lord Jesus*. You are to call a meeting of the church, and I will be there in spirit, and the power of the Lord Jesus will be with you as you meet.

1 Corinthians 5:4

And you will always give thanks for everything to God the Father *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Ephesians 5:20

So that at *the name of Jesus* every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth...

Philippians 2:10

Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you *in the name of the Lord Jesus* to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You are doing this already, and we encourage you to do so more and more. For you remember what we taught you *in the name of the Lord Jesus*.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-2

Then everyone will give honor to *the name of our Lord Jesus* because of you, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the undeserved favor of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:12

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we appeal to such people – no, we command them: Settle down and get to work. Earn your own living.

2 Thessalonians 3:12

With *Jesus'* help, let us continually offer our sacrifice of praise to God by proclaiming the glory of his *name*.

Hebrews 13:15

And this is his commandment: We must believe *in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ*, and love one another, just as he commanded us.

1 John 3:23

Hopefully I did not leave any out, did I? Again, whether you read each passage or skimmed the 30+ references I just threw at you, this point seems as strong as one can possibly be. The "name of Jesus" seems venerated as a god throughout the entire New Testament--a very odd phenomenon given the fact that almost all the writers of this work were Jewish and were fond of the First Commandment! So what then is really going on here?

Well, as we will see in a while, sometimes one reference that is ignored creates a false impression with dozens of other passages. For now though, let us take this journey in discrete steps.

What we are going to do for this section is compare two kinds of names and titles. For the former, there are Names--those that are imbued with power and linked to a promise directly from Elohim--and then there are the latter, or powerless, human variety. The ironic point is, Names and names look and sound the same. The difference is in the intentions we display when speaking them.

Therefore, one Torah concept that is not well understood is the concept 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

Did you catch that? The world shall **bless itself through Abraham's seed**. Now let us see how this principle manifests itself elsewhere in Tanakh:

"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

There can be no better or more sacred context for this. 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 not, as I hope is quite obvious, 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:

- 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 receiver of that promise.

Put simply, it does not get any more Jewish than that. You *pray* only in the name of YHWH, but you *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. They are two 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 entire Peshitta New Testament, we always see Messiah or Paul addressing their prayers to MarYah (ܡܪܝܐ), which literally means Master YHWH. In fact, the Aramaic Tanakh has MarYah stand in place of YHWH almost 7000 times, so there can be little doubt of its meaning.

Conversely, if anyone wanted to pray in the name of the man, they would have used the phrase "Our Master"-- Maran (מָרָן). However, just like with Abraham, they can access the power of the promise of Elohim with Maran. From there, two questions emerge: How did this happen, and is it really in harmony with Tanakh?

The answers to both are startling. What has happened, and what is very little understood, is that the name Y'shua itself 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 Y'shua-Joshuas in the world right now and for them it is just a name. It has no power and no divine promise within it.

However, the *Name* Y'shua was set apart by YHWH for Messiah to use as a way to take his unique mantle on. The reason is simple: 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 right intent.

The fact is, we cannot put a pagan name on Almighty Elohim. The way Exodus 20:7 reads in Hebrew, the word for taking the Name in "vain"--*shav*-- really means "to make desolate". How is this done? By taking the name of a pagan deity and applying it to YHWH. For example, one of those pagan gods was named Zeus and the names used to honor him, "Kurios" and "Theos", are exactly the same ones applied to YHWH in the Greek New Testament! To use a name for Zeus and apply it YHWH then renders the power of YHWH's promises as *shav*, literally giving His glory to another (Isaiah 42:8). If it is true for the Father, why then should the world think the principle is somehow abrogated for the Son?

Furthermore, that is why Philippians 2:9-11 says:

"Therefore Elohim exalted him to the highest place and gave him **the name that is above every name, and that at the name of Y'shua every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Y'shua is YHWH, to the glory of the Father.**"

Hebrews 1:4 says the same thing, 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 of Messiah, because there is YAH in Y'shua.

However, as I alluded to at the beginning of this section, sometimes one neglected passage can correct the standard interpretation of dozens of others. That is why I threw in all those "name of Jesus" references and

kept their Gentile names intact, because I wanted to show how hard it is to understand the truth of what "Y'shua" means by only using "Jesus". Here is the promised passage though that really breaks the truth wide open on to the stage of ideas:

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 you can:

- PRAY in the name of YHWH alone.
- 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 John 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 Messiah of Nazareth that a lame man was healed. However, Peter is careful to make that 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 that, "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 that no other Messiah that Elohim has chosen except Y'shua to fulfill that promise that YHWH has given. To say the Name then of Y'shua, is to acknowledge the power of YHWH to save us according to His Word.
- BAPTIZE 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 Holy 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 (Ezekiel 36:24) recognized, with all the glory again to YHWH. Keep in mind however that the Aramaic word for this actually carries a meaning closer to "immersion", as in using Jewish

ritual mikveh baths. Also, the fact is the Holy Spirit is simply another name for YHWH (Psalm 51:11) and the Messiah 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, as opposed to Y'shua. "When two or more gather in my name, there I am in the midst," really refers to the time after Messiah leaves the world. When that happens, he resurrects and "ascends to the right hand of the Father." This is a metaphor that means, "to dwell next to the Father," (Psalm 110:1). So, remembering that John told us about the Word made flesh that was with Elohim in the beginning (also see John 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 Messiah.

#15: Israel and the Church

In an abominable doctrine known as Replacement Theology, the idea is that all the blessings of the Bible were transferred to the Christians and the "Church" and all the curses in the Bible fell upon the Jews. While a fairly popular belief, it is nevertheless ludicrous scripturally:

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

Then what's the advantage of being a Jew? Is there any value in the Jewish ceremony of circumcision? Yes, being a Jew has many advantages. First of all, the Jews were entrusted with the very words of Elohim. True, some of them were unfaithful; but just because they broke their promises, does that mean Elohim will break his promises? Of course not! Though everyone else in the world is a liar, Elohim is true. As the Scriptures say, "He will be proved right in what he says, and he will win his case in court."

Romans 3:1-4

Obviously, both of these passages refer Jews and not Christians, since Gentile Christians are assumed to be Rav Shaul's audience in Romans. And then we have this:

I ask, then, has Elohim rejected his people, the Jews? Of course not! Remember that I myself am a Jew, a descendant of Abraham and a member of the tribe of Benjamin... Did Elohim's people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! His purpose was to make his salvation available to the Gentiles, and then the Jews would be jealous and want it for themselves. Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the Jews turned down Elohim's offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when the Jews finally accept it. I am saying all of this especially for you Gentiles. Elohim has appointed me as the apostle to the Gentiles. I lay great stress on this, for I want to find a way to make the Jews want what you Gentiles have, and in that way I might save some of them. For since the Jews' rejection meant that Elohim offered salvation to the rest of the world, how much more wonderful their acceptance will be. It will be life for those who were dead! ***And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their children will also be holy. For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be, too.*** But some of these branches from Abraham's tree, some of the Jews, have been broken off. And you Gentiles, who were branches from a wild olive tree, were grafted in. So now you also receive the blessing Elohim has promised Abraham and his children, sharing in Elohim's rich nourishment of his special olive tree.

Romans 11:1,11-17

And, just a few lines later:

Some of the Jews have hard hearts, but this will last only until the complete number of Gentiles comes to Messiah. ***And so all Israel will be saved.*** Do you remember what the prophets said about this? "A Deliverer will come from Jerusalem, and he will turn Israel from all ungodliness. And then I will keep my covenant with them and take away their sins." Many of the Jews are now enemies of the Good News. But this has been to your benefit, for Elohim has given his gifts to you Gentiles. ***Yet the Jews are still his chosen people because of his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For Elohim's gifts and his call can never be withdrawn.***

Romans 11:25-29

Therefore, Rav Shaul attacks hypocrites who happen to be Jewish, rather than calling all Jews (which would include himself) hypocrites. It is also clear that Jewish sinners are not the only people Rav Shaul rebukes in his writings:

I can hardly believe the report about the sexual immorality going on among you, something so evil that even the pagans don't do it. I am told that you have a man in your assembly who is living in sin with his father's wife. And you are so proud of yourselves! Why aren't you mourning in sorrow and shame? And why haven't you removed this man from your fellowship? Even though I am not there with you in person, I am with you in the Spirit. Concerning the one who has done this, I have already passed judgment in the name of the Master Y'shua. You are to call a meeting of the assembly and I will be there in spirit, and the power of the Master Y'shua will be with you as you meet. Then you must cast this man out of the assembly and into Satan's hands, so that his sinful nature will be destroyed and he himself will be saved when the Master returns. How terrible that you should boast about your spirituality, and yet you let this sort of thing go on. Don't you realize that if even one person is allowed to go on sinning, soon all will be affected? Remove this wicked person from among you so that you can stay pure. Messiah, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us. So let us celebrate the festival, not by eating the old bread of wickedness and evil, but by eating the new bread of purity and truth. When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. But I wasn't talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin, or who are greedy or are swindlers or idol worshipers. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. ***What I meant was that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a brother yet indulges in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Don't even eat with such people. It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your job to judge those inside the assembly who are sinning in these ways.*** Elohim will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, "You must remove the evil person from among you."

1 Corinthians 5:1-13

So if all Israel is saved, where is the "Church" in all this? Here is the answer:

Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders by birth. You were called "the uncircumcised ones" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts. In those days you were living apart from Messiah. ***You were excluded from Elohim's people, Israel, and you did not know the promises Elohim had made to them.*** You lived in this world without Elohim and without hope. But now you belong to Messiah Y'shua. Though you once were far away from Elohim, now you have been brought near to him because of

the blood of Messiah. *For Messiah himself has made peace between us Jews and you Gentiles by making us all one people.*

Ephesians 2:11-14

The reality is, there is no such thing as the "Church"--there is only a renewed Israel that Gentiles are allowed to join! Further, they do not replace Israel but become part of it!

Now, from a linguistic perspective, this is also true. The word that has come into English as "church" is actually *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία) in Greek. However, *ekklesia* in the Septuagint is actually derived from the Hebrew word *kahal* (קהל) in Tanakh, which means "assembly of Israel":

"You shall keep it (the Passover lamb) until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly (*kahal*--קהל) of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.

Exodus 12:6

Similarly, on the Aramaic side, the New Testament uses the word *eidta* (עדתא), which is the cognate of this Hebrew word in the same passage we just quoted:

"You shall keep it (the Passover lamb) until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the **congregation** (*adat*--עדת) of Israel is to kill it at twilight.

Exodus 12:6

Each of these words is referenced dozens of times in both Testaments, and has nothing to do with "The Church". *Instead, what is clearly seen is that Israel's family is extended to include the entire world coming into her congregation, because it is through Abraham that all nations will be blessed, but only if they follow YHWH's commands!*

#16: The New Covenant

The first thing to realize here, is that the "New Covenant" is found in the Old:

"The day will come," says YHWH, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved

them as a husband loves his wife," says YHWH. "But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day," says YHWH. "I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their Elohim, and they will be my people. And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their family, saying, 'You should know YHWH.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will already know me," says YHWH. "And I will forgive their wickedness and will never again remember their sins."

Jeremiah 31:31-34/ Hebrews 8:8

So, when Hebrews 8:13 says that the New Covenant is meant to put the Old aside, this has been greatly misunderstood by Christianity. It is not that the Old is 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 before, then what came before cannot be useless. Now look at this:

That is why he is the one who mediates the new covenant between Elohim and people, so that all who are invited can receive the eternal inheritance Elohim has promised them. For Messiah died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.

Hebrews 9:15

This is, once again, also described in the "Old Covenant" and was in fact prophesied there:

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of YHWH been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Surely He has borne our grief and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and YHWH has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased YHWH to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of YHWH shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 53:1-12

#17: Echad as Plurality

Let us start this section with the basics:

Hear O Israel, YHWH is our Elohim, YHWH is one.

Deuteronomy 6:4

Now most Jews probably will just stop here in their thinking, and rightly so, when hearing about Trinity.

Let's be real: Three is *not* one, okay? Deal with and move on with your life. As the Greek text reads, or at the very least, how it has traditionally been understood, the Trinity refer to three distinct and separate persons of Elohim the Father, Elohim the Son and Elohim the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the three divine persons are said to be equal, so the formula is:

Elohim the Father = Elohim the Son = Elohim the Holy Spirit

And they wonder why we roll our eyes! Those are THREE GODS!

Christians will counter though, "But they each have a different purpose", and my response is, "Okay, and Zeus was the king, Hermes the messenger, and Poseidon the master of the sea. They each had a different purpose too, didn't they?"

However, if they are really smart, they will look at Deuteronomy 6:4 with fresh eyes and say, "The word for 'one' is *echad* (אֶחָד), and that can mean a unity of aspects. If Elohim was exclusively singular, it would say *yachid* (יָחִיד) which can only mean one."

My answer: Yes and no.

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 Christians would like to believe. 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.

Although, that does not mean that Christians are entirely wrong in using *echad* as a pointer to the Godhead. Great Jewish rabbis, sages and mystics have been doing just that for centuries.

However, the difference that learned Jews understand that Christians do not is the reason behind Elohim being *echad*. It is not so much as Elohim being divided into distinct persons as it is pointing to the fact that Elohim is infinite. 1 Kings 8:27 relates this fact 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, is it entirely correct for conventional Jews to completely confine themselves to Deuteronomy 6:4 in this matter? By no means, because:

By the Word of YHWH the Heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth, all their host.

Psalms 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

So here we have the Spirit of YHWH sending several spirits also from YHWH to alight on a man and the Word of YHWH doing creation but--wait a minute--Isaiah says Elohim did that *alone!* What's going on?

The answer is simple. Once again, Elohim is One, and Infinity includes *everything*. That is why Trinity is wrong, because it reduces Elohim to the level of His aspects, or the signs of His Infinity.

Now, in the century before the birth of Messiah, it is very much the case that 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 New Testament itself with regards to messianic expectations, (Matthew 16:13-14), but it also permeates just about every aspect of what we know about life in Israel during that period. Even so, and of course acknowledging deep differences in opinion on the identity and power of Messiah, Torah just before the dawn of the Common Era paints a different picture of the Godhead. Instead of three 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* (אֶחָד), not Trinity.

After the advent of Messiah however, the Nazarenes (Acts 24:12-14), or Jewish believers who led the movement during its first fifty years, revised this picture slightly. To them, the Word of YHWH (*davar* in the Hebrew of Psalm 33:6) became the Arm of YHWH, or Messiah, (Isaiah 53:1). It is the Arm of YHWH's job to save both flesh and souls, (Exodus 6:6). Additionally, the "spirit of counsel" mentioned in Isaiah 11:1-2, was linked to the Holy Spirit that David prayed about, (Psalm 51:11), again the main point being they all came from Elohim and share in the one divine nature.

#18: The Sabbath

For this last term, I must offer a concession to the reader. The fact is, I can only give the basics on a topic this huge. For the rest, I encourage all that read this to seek out more extensive source material, such as Doug Trudell's excellent "Ancient Paths" series. It is my strong belief that only by systematically looking at every verse where a nearly ubiquitous term like this one appears, from Genesis to Revelation, can the full picture be realized in the mind of the reader. Therefore, while I will do my best to *represent* the testimony of Scripture and the trends it clearly lays out, all that read this must know that I am merely pointing them in the right direction. The rest is up to the reader's own discipline and study to complete.

And so, with these thoughts in mind, let us break this topic down, one concept at a time.

1) "Shabbat" means "seven":

The first misconception that we need to tackle is the idea that any day of the week will serve as a "Shabbat" if we seek ("God") with all our hearts. Therefore, the Christians say, since we pray on Sunday, this is all we need to do to please YHWH. Scripture though paints a different picture:

On the **seventh** (*shebayee*--שביעי) day Elohim finished the work that He had been doing, and He ceased on the **seventh** (*shebayee*--שביעי) day and declared it holy, because on it Elohim ceased from all the work of creation He had done.

Genesis 2:2-3

So what we see here is that "Shabbat" is derived from שביעי or "seven", and the "seventh day" simply becomes a title. Therefore, we should accept no substitutes. However, it is fair to look at how certain passages in B'rit Chadashah have been alleged to say otherwise, such as this one:

Therefore, let no one judge you by what you eat or what you drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath **day**--these things are a shadow of things to come--but the body **is** of Messiah.

Colossians 2:16-17

This is perhaps the most mistranslated passage in the New Testament on the Greek side. The KJV reading has the phrase "but the body *is* of Christ" and the *is* has italics because it is not found in the Greek but is maliciously inserted by the translators to change the meaning of the text.

The Aramaic can be read either as "but (by) the body of Messiah" meaning "except by the assembly of believers in Messiah" or "these things are shadows of things to come (such as) the body of Messiah", which would put the judgment directly in Messiah's hands. Either way, the idea is that pagans should not judge Torah observant believers in how they apply their keeping of the feasts in relation to their beliefs in Y'shua. It has never been intended to mean, as Christianity alleges, that the Feasts and Sabbath are not required. In fact the phrase "shadows of things to come" clearly means that the Torah observant Messianics continue in their ways until Messiah returns, at which time we are also told that sacrifices will be reinstated in the New Temple and kosher laws will still apply, (Isaiah 66:17-24).

Here's another one, and this time I will also use the footnote given by the translator, Charles Ryrie:

And on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

Acts 20:7 (NASB)

20:7 *on the first day of the week.* This became the regular day of worship for Christians in remembrance of Christ's resurrection on Sunday.

The Ryrie Study Bible, p. 246

This is my favorite, really, because it is so delicious in the way Ryrie ignores--or at the very least greatly simplifies--the facts of history. As we will see shortly, the process of Sunday "becoming the regular day of worship" is a little vague here. The reason for that ambiguity is simple however, because that evolution had nothing to do with the Bible or the apostles, but took another three hundred years to develop.

For now though, let us stay focussed on what we do know about this passage and the people involved in the "Sunday service". First of all we know they were Jews, since Acts 20:6 clearly says Rav Shaul and his entourage sailed after the Feast of Passover. If they are marking time then based on Jewish holidays, I think it is a pretty safe bet they are also observing Shabbat, especially when we see references like these:

And going on from Perga, they arrived in Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. And after the reading of the Torah and the Prophets, the synagogue officials said to them, "Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it."

Acts 13:14-15

And as Paul and Barnabbas were going out, the people kept begging them that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath. Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews of the Elohim-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabbas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of Elohim. And the next Sabbath, nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of Elohim.

Acts 13:42-44

And on the Sabbath day, we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled.

Acts 16:12

And he (Paul) was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath ,and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Acts 18:4

The other thing to keep in mind is, by our western reckoning, the timing of the breaking of bread was not even on Sunday! It is only by sloppily reading Acts 20:7 that it *appears* to be Sunday. The question is though, how can this be when the text clearly says "first day of the week"?

The answer is that it was the first day of the week by Jewish standards, with the time being reckoned from sunset to sunset. By our western calendar though (it was) not Sunday, but late Saturday night. "Sunday" would not officially begin until midnight, the exact time that the text tells us Paul kept talking to his people! And so, what does that fact have to do with today's Christians getting up on the following morning and going to "church"? Absolutely nothing! Do Christians gauge their days sunset to sunset? Of course not! Do they have an after Shabbat meal and worship for the most part on Saturday evening? Not in the least! Therefore, there is no linkage.

Instead, what is going on is a time-honored Jewish tradition, an after Shabbat meal called *havdilah*, where people literally got together to break bread (Jeremiah 16:7). The apostles then were not instituting a new day of rest, but were simply following the ancient traditions of their ancestors. Funny thing though, I don't see many rabbis claiming that the breaking of bread in Jeremiah's day replaced Shabbat worship, do you?

Let's move on then to the next alleged agent of change:

Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own Master, he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Master is able to make him stand. One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Master, and he who eats, does so for the Master, for he gives thanks to Elohim.

Romans 14:4-6

At first glance it sure sounds like we are not supposed to judge people who don't keep a special holy day like Shabbat. You know what? That is also the case on the second and third glance as well, but having said that, the conclusions drawn from this verse by Christians are totally absurd.

What the verse says is that YHWH judges each of us on our observance to His Torah, as well as our attitude behind the observance. Furthermore, there may be reasons why a brother is or is not doing a holy day that we do not know about. For example, the preservation of life clearly suspends Shabbat. Therefore, if a brother is not present at Shabbat and we do not know why, it is YHWH's job to judge that reason's validity. Similarly, another person may appear to be worshipping properly at Shabbat but, in his heart, he is thinking about all the shopping he has to get done before sunset, the bacon he is going to cook up later, and so on. In that case, we do not know if YHWH has ruled against him, even though that person may physically be in our midst! Either way, this verse does not say it is okay to not have Shabbat at all.

Finally, the verse talks about "he who observes, does so for the Master". In this case, the Aramaic clearly is referring to "Master Y'shua" as opposed to THE LORD YHWH, and it is a horrendous problem that the Greek text makes no distinction between "Lord" and "LORD". The reason though this verse reads the way it does is simple:

For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me **commanded** (*poqadona*) me what to say and how to say it. I know that His **command** (*poqadona*) leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.

John 12:49-50

He who does not love me does not keep my **words** (*miltha*); and the **word** (*miltha*) that you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.

John 14:24

The world must learn that I love the Father, and that I do exactly what my Father has **commanded** (*poqda*) me.

John 14:31

If you keep my **commandments** (*poqadona*), you will abide in my love; just as I have kept my Father's **commandments** (*poqadona*) and abide in His love.

John 15:10

Therefore, to do something for Y'shua, is also to do something for YHWH. And let's now look at the last candidate Christians use to invalidate Shabbat:

And I was in the spirit on the day of our YHWH, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a shofar.

Revelation 1:10

Wait a second---is something wrong? Isn't this verse supposed to read "Lord's Day", as in the day of Y'shua's resurrection? I'm sorry for this terrible mistake, I should have labeled this better. Here goes:

And I was in the spirit on the day of our YHWH, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a shofar.

Aramaic Revelation 1:10

There. That's better isn't it? Now let's look at this issue in a little more detail.

The phrase in Revelation (*b'yaoma MaranaYah*--**בְּיוֹמָא מַרְנִיָּא**) is extremely rare in the Aramaic Bible. It appears also in Nehemiah 10:29, which having been written in Persia shows a clear Aramaic influence. On the Hebrew side it reads *YHWH Adonenu* (**יְהוָה אֲדֹנֵינוּ**), whereas in Aramaic *mar* is the synonym of choice for "master" rather than *adon*. As a result, the Peshitta Aramaic Tanakh translates the Hebrew phrase as *MarYah Maran* (**מַרְיָא מַרְןָּ**).

However, in the rest of the Aramaic NT excluding Revelation 1:10, the title given to Y'shua is either "Mari" (My Master) or "Maran" (Our Master). Similarly, YHWH is always rendered as "MarYah", or "Master Yah". Only here though do we see this contraction, which parses out as "Our Master YHWH", which would make this passage referring to "the day of our Master YHWH". Now Christianity has argued that this relates to the first day of the week, with the "Master" being Y'shua, who rose from death on Sunday. Others point out that neither Saturday nor Sunday are directly mentioned, and this is true.

Having said that though, I would argue that there is only one day that has clearly been set aside by YHWH for His special use, and that is the Sabbath (Genesis 2:2-3, Exodus 20:8-11). Now, in terms of the prophetic use of "Day of YHWH", we should turn to references like Joel 1:14-15, where a sacred assembly is called, since other Scripture tells us a shofar is blown to do this, and this is also the case in Revelation 1:10, (Exodus 19:16-19, 20:18, Leviticus 23:24). Furthermore, the Great Feasts like Passover and Tabernacles are also considered Sabbaths, regardless as to the day of the week they actually fall.

Finally, returning to the usage of this phrase in Nehemiah, we find a parallel reference. Even though the word for "day" does not appear there, the context of the set-apart days, which either are directly or contain Sabbaths in them, is very much evident as we read:

The rest of the people--priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighboring peoples for the sake of the Torah of Elohim, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who were able to understand--all these now join their brothers the nobles and bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Torah of Elohim given by Moses the servant of Elohim and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of **YHWH our Master** (יהוה ארנינו)... We assume responsibility for carrying out the commands to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of Elohim, for the bread set out on the table; for the regular grain offerings and burnt offerings; for offerings on the Sabbath, New Moon Festivals and appointed feasts; for the holy offerings; for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel; and for all the duties of the house of Elohim.

Nehemiah 10:28-29, 32-33

Therefore, whether the "day of YHWH" is a weekly or an annual Sabbath, by virtue of it being set-apart, it remains a convocation wherein we are not to do any regular work. As such, it retains the essential definition of Sabbath in terms of it being a day of rest. However, considering the near ubiquitous use of the number 7 in Revelation (I count 54 times), the primary imagery in the mind of the Jewish writer is most likely inextricably tied to the seventh day of the week, whose regulations against work happen to also extend to the appointed times.

2) Shabbat also means a day of rest.

And so, we come to the perfect transition for our next point, Shabbat as a day of rest defined in Scripture.

Observe the **Sabbath** (שבת) day to keep it holy, as YHWH your Elohim has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the **seventh** (shebayee--שביעי) is a **Sabbath** (שבת) of YHWH your Elohim. You shall not do any work--you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or your donkey, or any of your cattle, or the stranger in your settlements, so that your male and female slave may rest as you do.

Deuteronomy 5:12-14

And so we see the wordplay once again between "Shabbat" and "seventh". More fundamentally to the point, Scripture also tells us certain occasions also are "Sabbaths", regardless of the day of the week that they fall. The reason for this injunction: You are not supposed to work on those special days either!

These are the set times of YHWH, the sacred occasions, which you shall celebrate each at its appointed time. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, there shall be a Passover offering to YHWH, and on the fifteenth day of that month YHWH's Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread for seven days. On the first day you shall celebrate a sacred occasion; you shall not work at your occupations. Seven days you shall make offerings by fire to YHWH. The seventh day shall be a sacred occasion; you shall not work at your occupations.

Leviticus 23:4-8

On that same day (Shavuot, Pentecost) you will hold a celebration; it shall be a sacred occasion for you; you shall not work at your occupations. This is a law for all time in your settlements throughout the ages.

Leviticus 23:21

YHWH spoke to Moses saying, "Speak to the Israelite people thus: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion commemorated with loud (shofar) blasts. You shall not work at your occupations; and you shall bring an offering by fire to YHWH. YHWH spoke to Moses saying, "Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you; you shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring an offering by fire to YHWH; you shall do no work throughout that day. For it is a Day of Atonement, on which expiation is made on your behalf before YHWH your Elohim.

Leviticus 23:24-29

Now I am going to pause here for just a moment. So far, we have seen simply that days of rest in addition to Shabbat are required as a matter of Torah. However, from this place, what we will see is that this day of rest, even if falling on another day of the week, is still called Shabbat. Let us continue then with the rest of this passage:

Indeed, any person who does not practice self-denial throughout that day shall be cut off from his kin, and whoever does any work throughout that day, I will cause that person to perish from among his people. Do no work whatever; it is a law for all time, throughout the ages in all your settlements. ***It shall be a Sabbath (שבת) of complete rest for you, and you shall practice self-denial; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall observe this your Sabbath (שבת).***

Finally, as if the English text is not strong enough here, the Hebrew actually doubles the emphasis with a wordplay on the same root! And so what comes out to our ears as "Sabbath of complete rest" actually reads in Hebrew as *Shabbat shabbaton* (שַׁבַּת שְׁבַתוֹן). Do you think that maybe He is trying to tell us something with that phrase?

3) There is more than one kind of Shabbat

As a result, what we see is that there are two types of days of rest, both called Shabbat. The first of course is the weekly variety that comes every seventh day. The second though is equally important, as special days of worship should never be detracted from by us having to do any kind of regular work.

4) Shabbat is eternal

These verses also, and contrary to what Christianity teaches, tell us that Shabbat, both weekly and annually, are eternal ordinances that apply to both Jews and Gentiles living with them. However, many Gentiles counter that, since they do not live among Jews and do not have that lineage themselves, that these rules do not apply to them. If so however, how do they explain this:

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 Messiah, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without Elohim in the world. But now in Messiah Y'shua, you who were far away have been brought near through the blood of Messiah.

Ephesians 2:11-13

So, it seems logical then to suggest the radical idea that he who joins to Israel also becomes subject to the laws of Israel, and what can that be other than the Torah?

Furthermore, there are places in Scripture where Shabbat is listed as a future observance, a fact that is made very inconvenient for us if the Christians are right and the institution has passed away!

For as the new heavens and the new earth *which I shall make* shall endure by My will, declares YHWH, so shall your seed and your name endure, and new moon after new moon, Sabbath after *Sabbath* (שַׁבָּת), all flesh come and worship me, says YHWH.

Isaiah 66:22-23

So there remains a *Sabbath rest* (*lemeshabato*--לְמִשְׁכָּבוֹת) for the people of Elohim.

Hebrews 4:9

Can that be the same word/root meaning both "seven" and "rest"? The evidence would seem to suggest that Shabbat is still going to be around for a while, at least from the perspective of both the apostle Paul and the fact that the new heavens and new earth have not arrived just yet.

5) The truth about who changed the Shabbat is a dirty secret in the West

So, since the Scripture never once talks about changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, the question that naturally arises is, how did it get changed for Christians? For this final section, I am simply going to quote from my friend Doug Trudell:

We have learned that there is nothing in the Bible to support a change from the Biblical seventh day Sabbath to a first day Sabbath. At best we have a couple of ambiguous verses that might somehow be construed to support a change. However, we have seen that the overwhelming evidence in the Bible supports a seventh day from Genesis to Revelation. Yet almost all of Christianity celebrates the first day of the week either recognizing Sunday as Sabbath or simply dropping the Saturday Sabbath and replacing it with Sunday worship. Churches are empty on Saturday for the most part but bustling on Sunday. Well, some aren't exactly bustling but they are open. How did this happen?

This chapter and the next couple of chapters are filled with quotes. I can't say please enough times when I ask you to read each of them thoughtfully and carefully. Believe me, they convey the message as to what happened far better than I ever could write it in my own words. I am certain that many of you may find some of the quotes eye opening and amazing. Some of them may actually stun you and some may shock you. Within them you will find the answers to who, when and why the Sabbath was changed.

It must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day.

McClintock and Strong, "Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature," Vol. 9, p. 196

Until well into the second century (a hundred years after Christ) we do not find the slightest indication in our source that Christians marked Sunday by any kind of abstention from work.

W. Rordorf, "Sunday," p. 157

The ancient Sabbath (7th day) did remain and was observed, by the Christians in the Eastern Church (in the area near Palestine) above three hundred years after our Savior's death.

"A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath," p. 77

The Festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic Church, to transfer the laws of Sabbath to Sunday.

Augustus Neander, "The History of the Christian Religion and Church," 1843, p. 186

Unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the Sabbath observance of that day (Sunday) is known to have been ordained, is the edict of Constantine, 321 AD.

Chamber's Encyclopedia, article, "Sabbath"

This (Constantine's Sunday decree of March, 321) is the great "parent" Sunday law marking it a day of rest and release from labor. For from that time to the present there have been decrees about the observance of Sunday which have profoundly influenced European and American society. When the Church became part of the State under the

Christian emperors, Sunday observance was enforced by civil statutes, and later when the Empire was past, the Church, in the hands of the papacy, enforced it by ecclesiastical and also by civil enactments.

Walter W. Hyde, "Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire," 1946, p. 261

Constantine labored at this time untiringly to unite the worshippers of the old and new into one religion. All his laws and contrivances are aimed at promoting this amalgamation of religions. He would by all lawful and peaceable means melt together a purified heathenism and a moderated Christianity... Of all his blending and melting together of Christianity and heathenism, none was more easy to see through than this making of his Sunday law. The Christians worshipped their Christ, the heathen their Sun-God... (so that they should now be combined.)"

H.G. Heggtveit, "Illustrated Kirkehistorie," 1895, p. 202

Doug Trudell, "Ancient Paths: The Sabbath", p. 66-67

And so, in closing, let me say that I not only agree with Doug Trudell, I also go a bit further than he does when I say that the true situation is even worse than these quotes make it out to be. The fact is, Christian argumentation cannot even stand the test of scrutiny when asked not to contradict its own doctrine.

Just follow along with me for a moment, and I think you will see what I am talking about. The idea of Sunday worship as a legitimate Biblical development is based on this argument:

- 1) Y'shua rose from the dead on Sunday.
- 2) The apostles met to break bread (perhaps have a broiled fish) also on Sunday.
- 3) The "Lord's Day" is meant to commemorate each Sunday, in honor of these events.
- 4) We are also not to judge someone in which day they esteem.
- 5) Therefore, all Christians should worship on Sunday.

Now each of these statements, except for the last one, have been discredited. Nevertheless, I am willing to take Christians at their word. We will suppose, just for the sake of argument now, that it is perfectly fine to transfer the Sabbath to the first day of the week. Now the whole Gentile world can go to Church on Sunday without guilt, okay?

Not quite, because here is the one place where "Replacement Theology" bites Gentiles on the behind! Let's go further then and see why:

6) We Gentiles are now grafted in to Israel.

In a word: OOPS! See the huge error that remains even then? No?

Well, the problem is this: *The Gentiles are still supposed to keep a Shabbat, so if they are right that Sunday is the day to do this, then they still have to rest!*

Now, if you are a Gentile Christian and are reading this, ask yourself honestly, do you really rest on Church-day or do you rush back to the office to get a handle on Monday's challenges? Do you abstain from transacting business, or do you run to the supermarket, dash home and then fry up some back bacon before the big game? How about this: **Do you even engage in business on your Sabbath day in church???** How are those bingo games and bake sales going, my friend? Is the DVD player you won in the raffle working out for you? Did you get enough money on the Sabbath day to spread your ideas around the world through missionaries replete with your same sense of "wisdom"? If Sunday is your Sabbath, then why in the world don't you use it as such? And please, whatever you say, don't blame the Holy Spirit, because that could be major trouble for you, (Mark 3:29)!

Okay, Gentile venting is over, and I feel much better now.

THE PATH OF LIFE

Introduction

In recent years, perhaps no issue has created a greater wedge in the Messianic-Nazarene community than mapping the process of creation and its relationship to Y'shua Ha Moshiakh. Very often, the process of tracking the strands of Biblical thought in this area can appear frustratingly vague and open to a wide variety of interpretations. However, by maintaining a continuity of concept and meaning from Hebrew Torah into Aramaic B'rit Chadashah, this task becomes immeasurably easier.

We come to this task though with a multitude of overlapping, and sometimes confusing, terminology. Is Y'shua eternal? What is the real meaning of "firstborn of creation", or the Word, or the Name? How do we know what the relationship is between the name of YHWH and that of His Messiah, and which to pray in? These questions, and many more, will be dealt with in this essay, as we will see how the proper understanding of Godhead is inextricably linked to the true nature of creation.

And so, what we will do here involves two steps. First, we will explore each lexical stream of meaning, from the earliest pages of the Torah to the last references up to and including the Book of Revelation. The transition then from a Hebrew term to its Aramaic counterpart, the latter sometimes even being the same word, will offer our best chance at recovering the original intended meanings of holy writers.

Once this is accomplished, we will move on to our second step, which will be tying all of these strands of meaning together into one unified account that answers the most vexing questions ever posed about the biblical text.

With those goals in mind, let us begin to unravel the mystery, one careful strand at a time.

1) The Word of Elohim

And Elohim said, "Let there be light," and there was light (*yehee aur ve'yehee aur--אור וידי-אור*).

Genesis 1:3

This passage of Scripture, although consisting of only six Hebrew words, speaks with a depth and on a volume of creative issues that is almost unfathomable. I can only therefore deal with some of the more major trends that arise from this handful of words, but each one will bear greatly on our overall purpose.

In many schools of biblical analysis, both Jewish and Christian, great emphasis is given to the "principle of first mention". Simply stated, this school of thought speaks to the idea that the first time a certain phrase or idea is used in Scripture represents a special benchmark, a milestone, that needs careful study as a way to unravel all the subsequent times it appears in the written record. Obviously then Genesis, being the first book of the Torah, is going to contain a great many of these milestones, if not almost all of them owing to its great size. And so, to start things off right, we need to spend a little bit of time and detail on this foundational verse.

To begin with, Genesis 1:3 is the first use of what me might call in English the present tense. Although technically speaking, Hebrew does not have "tenses" but rather "states of being" that are either completed (perfect/past) or incomplete (imperfect/future), and the present is something that is more implied rather than overtly stated in the text. Nevertheless, it is clearly there, because the prior two verses are in a kind of past summary form. That is to say, they are the preview of what the rest of chapter 1 is about as it says:

In the beginning, Elohim *created* the heavens and the earth. And the earth *was* without form and void, and the spirit of Elohim *was* over the face of the deep.

It is not until verse 3 then that we get a command *in the present tense*, that is to say, "Let there (right now, right this instant) be light."

What that tells us then is our first fact of creation: There are two divisions of the single event being referenced. The first is what can only really be termed as the *eternal-spiritual age*, or the interval that Elohim spent before creation. I say "interval" because time as we know it did not exist before creation, although Elohim did.

The next fact that we can glean from these precious few words is that physical creation is the result of Elohim speaking. Prior to that utterance, it is clear that Elohim is *thinking about creation*! That thought process is what calls forth the spiritual blueprints of all matter, as the spiritual equivalents of atoms and molecules line up and form carefully shaped patterns:

My frame was not concealed from you when I was shaped in a hidden place, knit together in the recesses of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed limbs; they were all recorded in Your book; in due time they formed, to the very last of them.

Psalm 139:15-16

The word (*davar*--דבר) of YHWH came to me:

"Before I created you in the womb, I selected you. Before you were born, I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet concerning the nations."

Jeremiah 1:4-5

Then, when the Word (*davar*--דבר) is spoken, they are imbued with physicality, just as the light was, and this brings me to our next point. Notice the word that YHWH speaks to bring about the light, and everything else, is a variant on His own name! I mean, we read these things in English and it just casually passes us by, but we need to remember that "YHWH" is derived from *hayah*, or the verb for "to be". And so, in Exodus 3 we have YHWH say to Moses *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh*, which is both "I am that I am" and "I will be what I will be". At the same time, during creation, YHWH seems to almost baptize everything with a form of His being by saying, *yehee* (יִהְיֶה), or "let there be".

It is also significant that light is the first thing created. Reason being light is *aur* (אור), which is also used as the root of "Torah" or "Word". In fact, "Torah", in addition to meaning "instruction", actually means "light", and is used that way in these verses:

Send forth Your light (אור) and Your truth; they will lead me; they will bring me to Your holy mountain, to Your dwelling place, that I may come to the altar of Elohim, Elohim, my delight, my joy; that I may praise You with the lyre, O Elohim, my Elohim.

Psalm 43:3-4

Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light (אור) to my path.

Psalm 119:105

For the commandment is a lamp. The teaching is a light (אור), and the way to life is the rebuke that disciplines.

Proverbs 6:23

In fact, and as we saw in an earlier section, one of the Aramaic words for "Torah" is derived from the same root:

For the Prophets and Torah (*aurayta*--אוריתא) prophesied until John (the Baptist).

Matthew 11:13

Or haven't you read in the Torah (*aurayta*--אוריתא) that on the Sabbath the priests in the Temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent?

Matthew 12:5

Love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All of the Torah (*aurayta*--אוריתא) and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

Matthew 22:40

And so, this continuity of meaning should demonstrate well the idea that "light" and "Torah" are related, and that both are inextricably tied to the process of creation. The same relationship exists between the first word of the Torah, *bereshit* (בראשית) and the word for "covenant", *breeth* (ברית) at a mystical level, since Elohim has planned everything out in advance, the word/covenant cannot be separated from the physical structures that emerge from the Divine Mind.

Although, as we progress further into the Scripture, what we see are direct references to the creative power of the Word:

By the word (*davar*--דבר) of YHWH were the heavens made, and by the breath of His mouth, all their starry host.

Psalms 33:6

My soul clings to the dust; revive me in accordance with Your word (*davar*--דבר).

Psalms 119:25

He said to me, "O mortal, can these dry bones live again?" I replied, "O YHWH My Master, only You know." And He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones and say to them, O dry bones! Here the word (*davar*--דבר) of YHWH! Thus said my Master YHWH to these bones, ***"I will cause breath to enter you and you shall live again. I will lay sinews on you, and cover you with flesh. And I will put breath into you and you shall live again, and you shall know that I am YHWH!"***

I prophesied as I had been commanded. And while I was prophesying, suddenly there was a sound of rattling, and the bones came together, bone matching to bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them,

and flesh had grown and skin had formed over them; but there was no breath in them. Then He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy O mortal! Say to the breath, "Thus said YHWH the Master: Come, O breath, from the four winds, and breathe into these slain, that they may live again." I prophesied as He commanded me. *The breath entered, and they came to life, and stood up on their feet, a vast multitude.*

Ezekiel 37:3-10

If this theme sounds familiar then, it is because one passage of the New Testament ably brings together every concept we have just discussed:

In the beginning (בראשית) there was the Word (דבר), and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim. He was with Elohim in the beginning. All things were made through his hands. Without him, nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that light was the light (אור) of men... The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father full of grace and truth.
John 1:1-4, 14

And then of course there is John's sequel, here:

That which was from the beginning (בראשית), which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, this we proclaim concerning the Word (דבר) of life. The Life appeared; we have seen and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us... This is the message that we have heard from Him and declare to you: Elohim is light (אור); in Him there is no darkness at all.

1 John 1:1-2,5

Now at this point, the reader should be aware that the Aramaic uses a slightly different phraseology here, and I have put the Hebraic equivalents into this text as a matter of convenience and concordance. For example, while there is a clear linkage linguistically with "Torah" as *aurayta* and אור, the Aramaic NT uses a synonym of אור known as *nohra* instead. Similarly, instead of דבר, another synonym, *miltha*, is employed, and that will be our next area to focus on.

Here is what Aramaic expert and translator par excellence Paul Younan had to say about this key phrase in the Gospel of John:

Miltha has no direct English equivalent. It can mean "Word", "Manifestation", "Instance" or "Substance", among many other things. In this context, it is best left untranslated.

And so, what we see here, is that one could say "In the beginning there was the Manifestation", as well, an idea that has profound mystical ramifications. Reason being, in mystical thought the aspect known as *Keter* (crown, will) is said to be the full embodiment and projection of YHWH:

Keter, the first of ten emanations of Elohim, refers to a Crown, with the term appearing in Esther 2:17. It is the only one out of the ten divine emanations that has been described as having no beginning and no end; it has always been and always will be. It is synonymous and co-eternal with the light of Ayn Sof (YHWH), which rests in seventh heaven and is designated the "ceiling" or "root" of the Tree.

Avi Ben Mordechai, *Messiah Volume 3*, p.183

Such a description is then identical to *miltha* as being a perfect manifestation/emanation/word of YHWH. Furthermore, John is not the only NT writer to reference this idea:

The Son is the *radiance* (*tzemkha*--צִמְחָה) of Elohim's glory and the *exact representation* (*tselma*--צֵלְמָא) of His being, sustaining all things by his powerful *word* (*miltha*--מִלְתָּא).

Hebrews 1:3

Here, the Aramaic Peshitta text gives us two synonyms to cement Rav Shaul's point. Both *tzemkha* and *tselma* have the context of exact reflecting of an original image; they are joined also to *miltha* that can also mean this in terms of perfect manifestation! Therefore, from a mystical perspective, the *Word* is *keter*, and that makes the Word eternal and YHWH Himself, according to John.

Another interesting aspect of *miltha* though is how its root is used elsewhere in the New Testament:

Y'shua spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled the what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables (*mithleh*--מִלְתָּא). I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

Matthew 13:34-35 (quoting Psalm 78:2)

This is, in essence, the same word, and certainly the same root. And so, we see Y'shua talking about *parables*, מִלְתָּא, unknown since creation because he was there as the Word, מִלְתָּא!

However, if Y'shua as the Word was with Elohim in the beginning, what happened to him after the resurrection, when he ascended into heaven? The answer is, Y'shua became the Word again, and dwelled next to the Father. Some will say to me though "Andrew, there is no passage that says Y'shua became the Word again," but I will argue there is, if you know where to look:

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider was called Faithful and True. With justice, he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the *Word* (מִלְחָמָה) of Elohim.

Revelation 19:11-13

And so, we know Y'shua becomes the Word when ascending into heaven because he still has that name when coming out of it!

2) The Firstborn of Creation

He is the image of the invisible Elohim, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the assembly; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have supremacy. For it pleased Elohim to have all his fullness dwell in him.³³ And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:15-20

This verse sometimes creates a little confusion and causes people to ask, "So does Y'shua as the Word only go back to creation but not before?" The answer is a surprisingly yes...and no.

You see, as the Word, Y'shua is the firstborn of creation, meaning that he was created directly by YHWH, but "through his hands" everything else was made. It is also for this reason that Y'shua is firstborn of the dead, because the lives of all things were made by him as the Word.

However, Y'shua's origins are not from that point, but go back to the eternal age we discussed at the beginning of this essay. Reason being, Y'shua was with Elohim and was Elohim and the Unspoken Word,

cleaving to the palate of YHWH's mouth. We find evidence of the relationship between thought and being here:

O YHWH, what great miracles you do and how deep are Your thoughts!

Psalm 92:5

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares YHWH. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:8-9

But they do not know the thoughts of YHWH; they do not understand His plan, He who gathers them like sheaves to the threshing floor.

Micah 4:12

The point of these passages is a simple one. YHWH's thoughts are actually part of Him. Therefore, since the Unspoken Word is also a thought of His, it is also a part of Him as well. And so, Y'shua exists pre-creation as that Unspoken Word, the Thought that gathers the spiritual particles together before the Utterance gives them life.

3) The Name of Elohim, Messiah and the Holy Spirit (The Holy Name, Part 1)

I am YHWH, that is My Name, and I will not give My glory to another, or My praise to idols.

Isaiah 42:8

All authority in heaven has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you, even to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:20

From this point, about thirty scriptural references follow, all proclaiming the need to pray "in the name of Y'shua". But is this really true as traditional Christianity teaches it? To find out, let us delve a little deeper:

"See I am sending My angel ahead of you, to guard you along the way, and to bring you to the place I have prepared for you. Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since My name (יְהוָה) is in him."

Exodus 23:20-22

"The days are coming," declares YHWH (יְהוָה), "when I will raise up to David a righteous branch, a king who will rule wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: YHWH (יְהוָה) is our righteousness."

Jeremiah 23:5-6

But after he had considered this, an angel of YHWH (יְהוָה), appeared to him and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you will name him Y'shua (יֵשׁוּעַ), for he will save His (יְהוָה) people from their sins."

Matthew 1:20-21

So the simple point is this, there is יְהוָה in the name of יֵשׁוּעַ. In fact Y'shua's name means "YHWH is salvation". His very name is an affirmation of faith in the one true Elohim, YHWH. And finally, we have this:

"I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father (יְהוָה)³⁴, protect them by the power of Your name (יְהוָה), *the name that You gave me*, so that they may be one even as we are one."

John 17:11

Therefore, the name that is an affirmation of faith in YHWH is the same name given to Y'shua. It just does not get any clearer than that.

Now many will say to me, "Okay Andrew, the names of the Father and the Son are related, and even the same, but what about the Holy Spirit?" Well, I'm really glad you asked me that! Let's see about the Ruach Ha Kodesh:

Create in me a pure heart, O Elohim, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from Your presence, or take Your Holy Spirit away from me.

Psalms 51:10-11

I will tell of the kindness of YHWH (יהוה), the deeds for which He is praised, according to all that YHWH (יהוה) has done for us. Yes, the many good things that He has done for the House of Israel, according to His compassion and many kindnesses. He said, "Surely they are My people, sons who will not be false to Me", and so He became their Savior. In all their distress, He too was distressed, and the angel of His presence saved them. In his love and mercy He redeemed them; He lifted up and carried them, all the days of old. Yet they rebelled *and grieved His Holy Spirit*. So He turned and became their enemy, and He Himself fought against them. Then His people recalled the days of old, the days of Moses and his people, where is he who brought them through the sea, with the shepherd of his flock? *Where is He Who set His Holy Spirit among them*, Who sent His glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right hand, Who divided the waters before them to gain for Himself everlasting renown, Who led them through the depths? Like a horse in open country, they did not stumble; like cattle on the plain, they were given rest by the *Spirit of YHWH* (יהוה). This is how You guided Your people, to make for Yourself a glorious name.

Isaiah 63:7-14

As a result, we see very clearly that the "Holy Spirit" is also just another name for YHWH, and that is why there really is only One Name (יהוה) that is referred to in three different ways in Matthew 28:20. That is why it is "Name" in Greek and Aramaic, and not "names"!

4) The Name that is Above All Names (The Holy Name, Part 2)

To get into this at an even deeper level though, let us look at this, the first of two key passages we will be examining in this section:

Therefore Elohim exalted him to the highest place *and gave him the name that is above every other name*. That at the name of *YHWH is salvation* (יְשׁוּעַ) every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that *Y'shua the Messiah is YHWH, to the glory of the Father*.

Philippians 2:9-11

We start then right where we left off in the previous portion. What comes out as "Jesus" in English or *Iesous* is Greek simply does not have the power of the Hebrew and Aramaic original name. Nor does it carry the direct meaning that I have highlighted above, but is merely a translation of a proper name divorced from its roots, puns and lexical cleverness. I have also rendered Philippians in this manner because of the way it reads in two places.

First, we see that the glory is not Y'shua the man's, but belongs to the Father. If we direct that glory anywhere else then, it is idolatry.

Second, we need to see the following phrase in Aramaic to appreciate this next aspect:

דמריא הו ישוע משיחא

D'MarYah haw Eshoa Meshikha

MarYah is the Aramaic cognate for YHWH and so, rather than getting confused by sloppy English versions that make no distinction between "Lord" (Y'shua the man) and "LORD" (YHWH), the Aramaic proclaims very clearly that Y'shua is in fact YHWH, which is why he also inherited the Name. Further, since the Name is YHWH's, all glory must go to Him. Now let's look at the second verse:

So he became as much superior to the angels, as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

Hebrews 1:4

Now what does this mean? Well, this idea harks straight back to the angel I described moments ago in Exodus 23:20-22. That angel has the Name (YHWH) in him. Furthermore, the fact that the verse warns he will not forgive sin implies that the angel could do this task if he wanted to, something only Elohim can do, and the Son who came in His Name (comp. Isaiah 43:1-3, 10-13, 24-28; 44:6-7; 45:5-8, 14-17 to Isaiah 53:1-12).

More fundamentally though is the fact that all other angels in Scripture have the name *El* in their names, reference YHWH only as a title. This particular one however, bearing the Name, is just as the later prophets proclaimed, bearing the actual name of YHWH instead, as Y'shua's name does. In essence, YAH is greater than EL, which is why Messiah's name is superior.

Furthermore, the prophet Zechariah foretold this connection between the names of YHWH and the Messiah, as well as the name of Messiah himself. In that case, we are told that a certain man is *not the*

righteous branch but instead has the name of the branch to come. To see this point clearly however we are going to have to take this key passage one small bit at a time. Let's begin:

Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee are men that are a sign...

Zechariah 3:8a

So the prophecy starts with the idea that Joshua and his associates are symbolic of things to come. Now let us continue:

...for behold, I will bring forth My servant the Shoot.

Zechariah 3:8b

Notice this carefully, the "servant " is also yet to come, so it cannot be the high priest Joshua nor his present company. The servant is also called the Shoot, 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

What this stone turns out to be will be most surprising, so I will save that for a moment. For now though the key part is 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

Now many counter-missionaries will strenuously object to this, saying that this cannot apply to the Messiah 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 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.

Finally, there is one other interesting anomaly in the Tanakh that bears pointing out:

מַלְאָךְ (malakh) = angel

מַלְאָךְ (malakh) = messenger

מֶלֶךְ (melekh) = king

So now when the apostle Paul calls the Messiah, "superior to the angels" (malakh), it will be easy to understand why. He is superior to them because he is not just an angel (malakh) and not just a prophet or messenger (malakh) but is instead King of Kings (melekh d'melekhim). And it is only now, with this full framework established, that Paul's next comment from Philippians makes sense:

And gave him a name greater than all names (YAH, not EL). That by the name of Y'shua (YAH SAVES) every knee will bow. Heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that **YHWH is Y'shua the Messiah**, to the glory of Elohim his Father.

5) I am that I am (The Holy Name, Part 3)

As any careful student of Scripture probably knows, יְהוָה is not the only name Elohim says He calls Himself by:

Moses said to Elohim, "When I come to Israelites and say to them, the Elohim of their fathers has sent me to you, they shall ask me, what is His name? What do I say to them?"

And Elohim said to Moses, "*Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* [I am that I am; I will be what I will be--אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה]. He continued, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, *Ehyeh* (אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה) sent me to you."

And Elohim said further to Moses, "Thus shall you speak to the Israelites, YHWH (יְהוָה), the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, has sent me to you. This shall be My name forever. This My appellation for all eternity."

Exodus 3:14-15³⁵

Both *YHWH* and *Ehyeh* however are derived from the same root of *hayah*, which can mean "to be" and "will be", and so in a sense both terms are two sides of the same lexical coin.

However, as the centuries passed, certain linguistic trends in Israel changed, and by the time of Messiah Aramaic became the language of the common people, with Hebrew relegated mostly to liturgical use. In the century or so prior to this time also, translations of Hebrew Scripture into Aramaic, also known as *targums*, then began to exert a theological influence in the way pious believers defined the sacred in their own local vernacular. The end result was that Aramaic cognates for both *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* and *YHWH* were developed, and both terms were adopted into the Peshitta New Testament to answer in the affirmative an often vexing question: Was Messiah divine?

Although, if that concept sounds slightly odd, it is not surprising, since this is perhaps the most misunderstood idea in the New Testament. Jews look at the Greek NT and, justifiably so, see idolatry in the text. Christians, if they are familiar with the Aramaic at all, impose later western corrupted meanings on to it that cause them to stray into grievous error. Some groups, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Unitarian Church and the Christadelphians, vehemently assert that Messiah is a human being with no divine attributes. At the other end of the spectrum, we have various Monophysite movements who claimed just as passionately that the opposite was the case, with a fully divine Messiah that only looked human. In both these cases, the error was either a result of deliberately moving away from the original Aramaic meanings in the New Testament, or simply forgetting them altogether due to bad translations into Greek.

However, here is how the Aramaic makes very clear what the Greek obscures:

אמר לה ישוע **אנא אנא נדחמא ודחא** מן ומדחימן בי אפן נמות נחא

And Y'shua said to her (Martha), **"I am the resurrection and the life.** He who believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."³⁶

John 11:25

Now normally when an Aramaic speaker wished to refer to himself he would simply say *ena* (I). However, when it came to addressing the speech of the Almighty doing the same thing, the phrase *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* became *Ena-na* (I am).³⁷ Therefore, by Y'shua saying *Ena-na* rather than the conventional truncated "I", he was deliberately claiming for himself a title exclusive to *YHWH*. In so doing, the Aramaic destroys another long held myth in the "human only Messiah" camp that the idea of making Y'shua divine was a completely Pauline innovation that the Gospels never claim.

Instead, the repeated use of *Ena-na*, coming out of Y'shua's mouth almost a dozen times in John's Gospel alone, proves this idea was inherent in the theology of the man, and was recorded faithfully by those who knew him best.

Moving on, the next area to look at is how the Greek text, while superficially appearing to be ambiguous on the point, actually acknowledges the same truth in the way it handles translating this Aramaic speech pattern. In the same passage of Scripture, this is how it reads:

ειπεν αυτῳ· Ἰησοῦς, *#Egwveijni* ἡ ἀπιστία σου· καὶ ἡ ζωὴ σου πιστεῦν εἰς ἐμεῖ· καὶ ἀποθῶν/ζησεις

Like its Aramaic counterpart, *ego eimi* is very awkward usage in terms of a person referring to himself. In fact, it is actually bad Greek grammar to do so when a simple *eimi* is the way this is always done. As a result, the usage of this phrase is so odd that many Greek primacists, who would never give in on the idea of Aramaic being the language of the New Testament as a whole, readily admit this as a very deep Semitism buried in their "original Greek".

Furthermore, some of these scholars have sought to explain it as a Hebraicism that perhaps came about through a "Jewish Greek" dialect. Others have looked to the use of the name YHWH or the verbs for "to be" that we have already discussed, as influencing the text.

However it is done though, there is far from universal agreement as to how this happened, and the most odd thing of all is that every western attempt bypasses the original language of both the speaker and writers of the Gospels--Aramaic--as a potential answer to even explore! To Peshitta-Primacists then like myself, such myopia is tantamount to having a roomful of Shakespearean scholars study *Hamlet*, but only in their native language of Bulgarian. As a result then, western scholars miss the critical fact that the only way *ego eimi* makes sense at all is through Aramaic influence.

6) The Arm and Hand of YHWH

Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, I am YHWH, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

Exodus 6:6

You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and YHWH your Elohim brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore YHWH your Elohim commanded you to observe the sabbath day

Deuteronomy 5:15

YHWH has bared His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our Elohim.

Isaiah 52:10

These three verses establish the meaning of the arm of YHWH, as a saving force granting freedom or rewarding righteousness. The arm is further symbolic of the implementation of YHWH's will into the physical world. However, there are two other uses of this phrase that need to be looked at:

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 48:12-13

Who would have believed our report? To whom has the arm of YHWH been revealed?

Isaiah 53:1

So the first passage shows us that creation was in YHWH's arm, which is very interesting when we come to here:

כל באִידהּ הוא ובלעדוֹהִי אִפְּלֵא חֵדָּא הוּת מַדָּם דְּהוּא

All things were made **through his hands**, and without him not even one thing that has existed, did exist.

Aramaic John 1:3

As we can easily see then, what John calls "the Word of Elohim", and which we have seen before can also mean "the Manifestation of Elohim", is now said to have hands that cause and shape all creation.

Alternatively though, the counterpart phrase in Isaiah 53:1 is meant to show that the same "arm of YHWH" is in fact embodied in Messiah himself! Notice also that the Aramaic again retains a clear word-image-picture from Tanakh that was surely greatly diluted later when it was put into a more neutral sounding Greek translation.

7) The Piercing of YHWH and His Only Son

I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced (*et asher dakaru-- דקרו* אֵת אֲשֶׁר); and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only (*yachid-- יחיד*) son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

Zechariah 12:10

The first thing to notice is that the direct object pointer אֵת is meant to show what part of the sentence receives action. In this case, the part that receives the action is YHWH, who is Himself pierced! This fact though raises an uncomfortable question: Since YHWH is Spirit, how can He be pierced? The answer is a few words later in the same verse. The phrase "only son" is יחיד, and it is an exclusive singularity, meaning that only the Messiah has an occurrence of YHWH's nature, as opposed to a separate divine nature, which would be idolatry. And so, יחיד guarantees that Messiah is the only human who has had, or ever will have, an occurrence of the one divine nature living separately, and yet side by side, in his own human nature. You don't have to go to the Gospels then to get the truth of this matter.

Furthermore, the Spirit of YHWH is said to rest upon Messiah (Isaiah 11:1-2), and so if the flesh of the man containing YHWH's Spirit is pierced, then metaphorically speaking so is YHWH pierced.

Therefore, in Zechariah's case, the placement of אֵת leaves no doubt whatsoever that it is YHWH receiving the action of piercing, and yet they mourn for **him (Messiah)** as an only son! That 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 is 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 Elohim" in this context does not mean *identical* but rather "of the same substance as Elohim".

What's the difference? Well, water, ice and air are the same substance but are they identical? Does each one act or is able to do the exact same things as the other two? In the same way, Messiah is made up of the same "divine stuff" as YHWH, but is given a subservient function by the very nature of the fact that he has become human. That is also why he can say "I am nothing without my Father", because without that divine part, he is just another man! This idea of course brings us back to Paul's "appearance of a man" or "like a man, and yet not".

8) The Sign of the Cross

The final "term" in our study is not so much a word as it is a concept and pattern. Put simply, the template of creation is fire and water converging, and forming a cross.

Here's why:

Example #1:

In the beginning, Elohim created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of Elohim ***hovered over the waters***. And Elohim said, "Let there be light, and there was light."

Genesis 1:1-3

The facts of this passage are as follows:

- 1) *Ruach* (רוּחַ), the word for "Spirit", can also be translated as "wind" or "breath".
- 2) The *Ruach* is moving horizontally, ***across the waters***. There is also moisture in breath.
- 3) In Aramaic, the words for *light* and *fire*, derive from the same root.
- 4) The light comes from above and goes on down, as this passage clearly shows:

Every good and perfect gift is from ***above, coming down*** from the Father of Heavenly ***lights***, in whom there is no shifting of shadow.

James 1:17

And so, the light/fire comes from down from above, and the *Ruach* (breath/wind/spirit) moves over the waters ***across***. The light/fire and wind/water meet, and form a cross for creation to happen.

Example #2:

Then the angel of Elohim, ***who had been traveling in front of Israel's army***, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming

between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side ***and light to the other side***, so neither went near the other all night long.

Exodus 14:19-20

Notice:

- 1) The angel of Elohim moves out in front, across. The angel has the *Ruach* and moves this way.
- 2) Then the cloud ***shines light from above***
- 3) The light and Ruach meet, forming a cross.

Example #3:

Then Moses stretched his hand ***over the sea***, and all that night YHWH drove the sea back ***with a strong east wind*** and turned it into dry ground...During the last watch of the night, YHWH looked down ***from the pillar of fire and cloud down on the Egyptian army..***

Exodus 14:21,23

And once again:

- 1) The ***pillar of fire*** is from above, with YHWH looking down.
- 2) Moses stretches his hand ***across the water..***
- 3) The waters are driven back ***by a strong east wind blowing across the water.***
- 4) The fire comes down, the water goes across, forming a cross.

Example #4:

(The Baptist said), "I baptize you with ***water*** for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to untie. He will immerse you with the ***Ruach Ha Kodesh, and with fire.***"

Matthew 3:11

This one is pretty clear I think.

Example #5:

In the beginning there was the **Word** (comparing to Genesis 1:1, this is the Spirit of Elohim) and the Word was with Elohim **and the Word was Elohim**...In him there was life, **and that life was the light of men**.

John 1:1,4

Isaiah 48:11 has YHWH create the cosmos, but Psalm 33:6 has this happen through the Word. The Word and the Spirit then are one and the same.

Example #6:

There are two accounts of the Ruach Ha Kodesh coming. The first one is by the breath of Y'shua breathing on to the disciples (John 20:22). The second one though is with fire in Acts 2! Again fire and water are needed, the fire meets the spirit/wind, and forms a cross. Is this pattern getting familiar yet?

Example #7:

Do not put out the Ruach's (spirit/wind)'s fire.

1 Thessalonians 5:19

Example #8:

And speaking of Thessalonians, we have this reference in the second letter:

And when the Torah-less one will be revealed, whom the Master Y'shua will overthrow **with the breath of his mouth** and destroy with the **splendor** of his coming³⁸.

2 Thessalonians 2:8

And compare it to our last reference (so far), which is here:

And I saw heaven open up and before me there was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. *His eyes were like blazing fire*, and on his heads are many crowns. He has a name written on him, known only to himself. He is dressed in a robe dripped in blood, and his name is *the Word of Elohim*. The armies of *heaven* were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Revelation 19:11-13

Conclusion

The bottom line though is this. There is only one group of people who are given the eternal words of YHWH, and that is the Jews who wrote both parts of the Bible. The second half never contradicts the first, and the first lays the foundation for the second. The other thing we see, and I will close with this thought, is that from Genesis to Revelation we have the same message given to us, over and over again:

YHWH Elohim took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to take care of it. And YHWH Elohim commanded the man, "You are free to eat of any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it, you will surely die."

Genesis 2:15-17

Blessed are those who do His commandments, for they shall be empowered to go to the tree of life and enter by the gates into the city.

Revelation 22:14

I would think then, after all the evidence is recorded, that the best course is to choose the path to life. But then again, it's only a suggestion!

Peace and blessings to you all,

Andrew Gabriel Roth

February 8, 2004

ENDNOTES

¹ Noting that the Aramaic New Testament retains sacred name usage of YHWH and Elohim, but uses their singular forms of Yah and Eloah (Alaha by their dialectical pronunciation). Both of these names though are referenced in a minority reading in Tanakh and have rabbinic approval as original names.

² According to the ancient Aramaic translation of the Tanakh from Hebrew sources, a.k.a. "Peshitta Tanakh", which was compiled in Babylon around 100 BCE. (United Bible Society, 1979 edition.)

³ There are some very minor exceptions to this rule where another synonym is used in the same way. In Romans 10:8 the phrase *petgama* is used in the context of the "word of faith" which could be indirectly seen as a spiritual command. This flexibility of meaning arises because the same word also means "to account for" as in giving Elohim an account of our deeds at the end of our lives. The bottom line though is that none of these instances, in any way, detracts from the point at hand or the usage being shown. So, unless another reference is made to the contrary, the reader may assume my statements here apply equally to the entire New Testament.

⁴ Obviously in this passage "namusa" is implied, for what else could the writings of Moses be other than the Torah?

⁵ The line before this "circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing" has been greatly perverted by mainstream Christianity. What the apostle Paul clearly teaches here is that one does not do a ritual for ritual's sake, including circumcision, which was practiced by many nations in the Middle East without its spiritual context. Instead, what is being taught is that all the Torah must be followed, but only when that obedience is preceded with the understanding that the ritual came from YHWH. See Jeremiah 9:25-26 and Romans 2:28-29.

⁶ In both Greek (*telos*) and Aramaic (*sekah*) the words in question are better translated as "goal". In this sense, the Torah points to Messiah by teaching us the signs that demonstrate his identity. If Paul had meant "end" as in termination, then it makes no sense that he would quote Moses commanding us to live in the righteousness of that same Torah. Furthermore, the use of this word in 1 Timothy 1:5, James 5:11 and 1 Peter 1:9 only make sense with a reading of "goal".

⁷ Notice how Paul is summing up only the Ten Commandments that apply to our fellow man, or the last six. The first four commands, that apply to YHWH only, he deals with elsewhere, as we will see.

⁸ "using Torah properly", i.e. not having the works in and of themselves be a form of justification. Torah in fact never teaches that works alone justifies a person. Rather, Torah shows from Genesis 2 to the last chapter of Malachi that the ritual must be perfected with the right faith and spiritual attitude. The lesson given over and over again by the NT writers is always that of Abraham, who believed in YHWH first, and let that belief manifest in right action.

⁹ Obviously Peter here is familiar with the fact that "Torah" is derived from the root *aur* (אור), meaning "light", and this wordplay was of course referenced earlier with respect to the Psalms.

¹⁰ As this study clearly shows, just about every major commandment, appointed time, feast and ritual is reflected in the New Testament, and observed by Y'shua and his followers. Perhaps the only holiday I could not find a direct reference to is Purim, but there may be a few factors at work here: 1) Purim is mentioned as "the Feast of the Jews" in John 5:1, and I am incorrect about that being the Feast of Weeks. If that is true, the record gets even stronger since we know Shavuot was kept elsewhere, such as in the book Acts; 2) Purim is a post-Mosaic feast which, while celebrated in Israel in Y'shua's time, was not considered a requirement. This becomes interesting when we consider another optional post-Mosaic feast, Hanukkah, was celebrated by Y'shua in John 10. When combined with Y'shua's assertion that no one should break the "least of these commandments" in Matthew 5:17-20, it is very likely that the keeping of this feast as well

was implied; 3) Purim was not ordained directly by YHWH and had its origins outside of Israel. Furthermore, the absence of the Book of Esther from the Dead Sea Scrolls record may indicate, at a minimum, a diminished influence of Persian Jewry on the worship of Israeli Jews in the first century, (Esther 9:29-32). It is also worth noting that while Purim dealt with Jews in Persia, Hanukkah was about a holy war in Jerusalem and a fierce struggle to remove Greek paganism from its holy soil. As such, the theme of Hanukkah might have had slightly more resonance with Jews in Israel than Purim did, although it is true every Jew can relate to Purim's wonderful example of redemption from genocide.

¹¹ 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* (ܡܪܝܐ) that it is YHWH being referenced.

¹² 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 Messiah, all who call on Messiah's name are actually calling on YHWH, and sharing in eternal life through YHWH.

¹³ Obviously Y'shua is worried that some of his disciples will not realize Shabbat is suspended for the sake of saving life. He therefore reminds them that when they see the signs they really need to get going, but it is surely not an indictment against Shabbat itself.

¹⁴ Noting that Y'shua kept the Shabbat day, but had a different opinion on what constituted work. Y'shua would always point out the hypocrisy of man-made traditions, such as that circumcision is suspended on Shabbat but he is upbraided for healing the whole body. The Dead Sea Scrolls also record that the Essenes, contrary to the halakha of both Y'shua and the Pharisees, would not lift an animal from a pit on Shabbat.

¹⁵ The phrase in the Aramaic is "Maran", meaning "Our Master", i.e. Y'shua.

¹⁶ The Aramaic word *arsa* (ܐܪܫܐ) can mean "bed" but is better translated as "coffin". This is one of the strongest indications that Revelation was not originally penned in Greek, since Greek has distinct words for bed and coffin, and their reading of punishing a prostitute by throwing her on a bed is comical to say the least. 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. It is also worth noting that *arsa* (ܐܪܫܐ) appears both in the Aramaic translation from the Greek known as Peshitto, as well as the Crawford manuscript of Revelation.

¹⁷ The research that identifies this feast as Shavuot is fully detailed in "Signs of the Cross", p.405-409.

¹⁸ See Isaiah 58:1-14.

¹⁹ The true significance of the ruling of Acts 15, that circumcision is not a requirement for salvation but should be performed only when the person has studied Torah first, as opposed to not happening at all, is beyond the scope of this essay. However, it is thoroughly dealt with in "The Nazarene View of the Circumcision Controversy in Acts 15".

²⁰ Obviously though Isaiah isn't saying YHWH hates these things no matter how well they are done, because Isaiah 66:23-24 talks about these very same festivals being done in a way acceptable to Him.

²¹ 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* (ל'אילין דבנמוסא), 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.

²² 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, "guided by the Torah". This means that Torah was a teacher for those who were looking for Messiah, and that Torah taught by giving us the time, nature and circumstances behind Messiah's coming through prophetic utterances.

²³ A very close synonym to קללה is found in Galatians 3:10 and 13, *lot* (לוט).

²⁴ This reading is, of course, highly controversial to the rabbis who developed the Masoretic Text and changed it to read "like a lion, they are at my hands and feet." My point about this reading is two-fold. First, metaphorically, the meaning of the passage is unchanged, since lions do have a tendency to pierce through human flesh when they get near it. Secondly, the universal Jewish testimony prior to Messiah's time tells us in no uncertain terms that the Psalm did read "they have pierced my hands and feet", since this rendering is reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint and the Peshitta Tanakh.

²⁵ 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.

²⁶ In several other passages, while not absolutely exclusive to this meaning, it can be argued that "goal" is still the better reading, (Philippians 3:19, James 5:11, 1 Peter 4:7).

²⁷ It is important to note that John 1:17 is also sometimes twisted to mean that "grace and truth" are around only from Y'shua's time onwards. However, what the passage really says, in both Aramaic and in Greek, is that grace and truth came *through Messiah*, meaning that the promise of salvation given in Torah was made complete in Messiah, but we have always been under grace and never simply "under the Torah". The proof of this is in John 4:22 with Y'shua saying "salvation is from the Jews", meaning that the promise of salvation, while completed in Messiah, was given foundation in the Jewish progenitors, going all the way back to Abraham, (John 8:52-58).

²⁸ Rav Shaul also plays off of the sonic nature of this wordplay in Galatians 3 and 4 when he talks about "tutors" (taraa) who locked up the Torah. He is actually forming a pun from the same root.

²⁹ This is literally meant by the "book of life" as described both in Daniel and in Revelation. In the former we read:

As I looked the thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool, His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attended Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated and the books were opened.

Daniel 7:9-10

However, this imagery is continued and logically extended to judging humanity here:

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

Revelation 20:12

Although, it is fair to point out that the Tanakh trends for this idea go back much earlier. Moses is said to have alluded to the book of life when he said, "But now forgive their sin, but if not, blot me out of the book You have written" (Exodus 32:32), and Psalm 69:28 declares, "may they be blotted out of the book of life, and may they not be recorded with the righteous." The reason though that there are always *books*, as opposed to one book, is because you need one volume to record our sins and the other to record our good deeds. Through Y'shua however, we are forgiven, and the book of death ledger is nullified and nailed to the cross, thus allowing our names as kosher people to appear in the book of life.

³⁰ "Zorban redaction" is a slang term I developed at www.peshitta.org. Basically, Zorba is the name given collectively to the Greek redactors that mistranslated the Aramaic text. I drew the term from the classic 1964 movie "Zorba the Greek", because in my view a lot of these biblical editors do a great deal of "dancing around the facts"! In response to this, a Greek Primacist once accused me of being a "Teveyin", named after Tevye, a Jewish dancing character in "Fiddler on the Roof", because I talk about Hebrew/Aramaic traditions in spite of their view of the scholarly record. Ironically, when travelling on business in South Carolina, I came across an advertisement for a Greek restaurant that read: "Come to Zorba's! We are conveniently located on Andrew Avenue!" I grabbed two flyers from the hotel I was staying at, because I thought many of my colleagues simply would not believe the coincidence.

³¹ And in fact this is a conservative boundary here. In the Aramaic version of John 8:58, Y'shua says, "Before Abraham was, I *was*."

³² In this one instance, to make a very precise spiritual point, I will use the common name of "Jesus" and keep other references in Christian translations intact. The reason for this will become very clear later on.

³³ Here is yet another proof that the *miltha* is equivalent to the mystical term *keter*. For just as *keter* is defined as the perfect emanation or representation of the invisible Elohim, so too does Rav Shaul use nearly identical language here. The phrase "all things are made by him and through him" is also reminiscent of John's language of "everything was made through his (Messiah's) hands."

³⁴ If there is any doubt on this identification of YHWH as the Father, consider: "But You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, or Israel acknowledge us; You, O YHWH (יהוה), are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is Your name," (Isaiah 63:16).

³⁵ This verse is confirmed verbatim in the Peshitta Tanakh, proving that the Masoretic Text retains a very ancient reading of this passage. However, unlike the Septuagint, the Aramaic retains the exact transliteration of the term.

³⁶ The reason this phrase is pronounced as *Ena-na* is because the third *alap* (אנא אנא) is silent. Modern Aramaic manuscripts indicate this by a *linea occultis*, or accent mark, that is placed above the silenced letter.

³⁷ Interestingly enough, one the passages that most people expect to read as "I am" actually doesn't. In John 8:58 [8:47 in the Peshitta] Y'shua says, "Before Abraham was, I *was*." While it is true that *Ena-na* is the equivalent of *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* and therefore can be read as either "I am" or "I was", the actual Aramaic phrase is *d'aidala nehwa Awraham aina ayti* (דעדלא נהוא אברהם אנה איתי), with *ayti* having the exclusive meaning of "was".

³⁸ This is the Greek reading. The Aramaic though uses a common wordplay in the sense that spiritual enlightenment is equated with physical light. In that case, the word used instead of "splendor" is *gilyana* (גלינא), which has a majority meaning of "revelation". A related wordplay is also in John's Gospel where there is a close proximity of *gilyana* and *Galilee*, which is where Y'shua revealed his mission. "Splendor" of course is also an interesting reading in the Greek, because it is reminiscent of the Aramaic term *zohar*, which is the "Book of Splendor" of Jewish mysticism.