



## **The Hope Of The New Covenant**

MJAA Southeast Regional Conference

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*Shalom! Good afternoon everyone! I am happy to be able to continue to teach at this great conference. I first attended it in 1996 and began teaching here in the early 2000's. I missed last year and am happy to be back. Our conference theme, HaTikvah, The Hope, is so very appropriate for what we are seeing happening in the world today. Its meaning regarding the Jewish people is a major part of our Messianic Jewish vision. In our congregation, during the Torah service each Shabbat, we sing Od Aveinu Chai, Our Father Still Lives, followed by Am Israel Chai, the Israelites live! That is the first understanding of HaTikvah, the Zionist's hope of a national homeland. But, the second and most important hope for "all Israel", a presently unrecognized hope, is that Yeshua, their Messiah, is "The Hope." This aligns with our major prayer, that of the fulfillment of Sha'ul's prophecy in Romans 11 (25-27) for the salvation of "all Israel." While we as a body have some limited success with Jews accepting Yeshua, thereby becoming the "first fruits," we understand according to the Scripture that what Sha'ul spoke about will be a sovereign event performed by ADONAI as Israel sees Yeshua and mourns for Him as we are told by Zechariah (12:10). Speaking through Ezekiel, ADONAI made it even clearer that He would save His people. Within the thirteen verses beginning at 36:24, He made a number of significant statements. ADONAI said: 1. "**I will** take you from the nations." 2. "**I will** sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean." 3. "**I will** give you a new heart." 4. "**I will** put a new spirit within you." 5. "**I will** remove the stony heart from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." 6. "**I will** put My Ruach within you." 7. "**I will** cause you to walk in My laws." 8. "**I will** be your God." 9. "**I will** save you from all your uncleanness." 10. "**I will** call for the grain and make it plentiful." 11. "**I will** multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field." 12. "**I will** cause the cities to be inhabited and the ruins will be rebuilt." And, He concludes: "I, Adonai, have spoken it. So **I will** do it." (Found within Ezekiel 36:24-36 TLV). Our efforts including our prayers are necessary, but it is clear that it is ADONAI who will bring the people of Israel into the *Malchut BenDavid*, the Kingdom of the Son of David, Yeshua. This is our focus and our ongoing prayer, that they would understand that ADONAI has cut a New Covenant with Israel and that the covenant they are trying to follow is no longer effective, but also that the New Covenant is not so different from the Covenant made at Sinai.*

In the last weeks, I have been teaching a series entitled, Disciples of Yeshua. The events of our days show us that we must be even more diligent to be about our Father's business and especially actively as Yeshua's disciples. We are all called to be evangelists and must be students in order to evangelize. In my opinion, *Sha'ul* is our greatest teacher for this task. He is the most visible of Yeshua's disciples, primarily because he wrote so many letters describing his ministry. When we think of *Sha'ul*, one word comes quickly to mind; *Torah*. In the congregations which had so many former idol worshippers, he began with milk. But, to the Roman congregation which had many Jews, he began speaking about *Torah* early in his letter. Many shy away from the word, but to understand the New Covenant, it is essential that we understand *Torah*. We also use *Sha'ul's* Hebrew name instead of Paul, to remind us that he was a Jew who continued to exercise his Jewishness in both his life and

his teachings. We interpret what he says about the *Torah* in the context of his understanding of Jewish spiritual life, spiritual life as it applies to both Jews and Gentiles, and that even though they are different, they are equal partners in G-d's family.

This will not be new information for many of you, but to make sure everyone understands, we will begin at the beginning. The word *Torah* is derived from the root, *yara*. *Yara* can mean to lay or place straight, as to shoot an arrow, or to point with the finger, as in teaching. *Torah* basically means teaching, whether, it is a wise man instructing his son or ADONAI instructing Israel. G-d, motivated by his love, reveals to man, basic insight into how to live with each other and how to approach Him. On its narrowest level, *Torah* is the five books of Moses, Genesis through Deuteronomy. This is the basic sense of *Torah*, but on a broader level, it also includes the writings of the *Nevi'im*, the prophets, and also the other books in the Hebrew Scriptures, Psalms, Proverbs and the others, which are collectively called the *Ketuvim*, the writings. Also included as *Torah* are the inspired writings of the first century disciples of Yeshua, broadly known as the *B'rit Chadashah*, the New Covenant, which I often refer to as the *Ketuvim Shlichim*, the Writings of the Emissaries, the Apostles.

Within the basic understanding of *Torah* as teaching and instruction, we also find ADONAI's *mitzvot*; His commands, singular, *mitzvah*. Also included is the history of the people of Israel which itself includes their history, stories, and genealogy. We also find the messages of the Prophets of Israel and the Wisdom books of Proverbs, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and the others. In summary, the term *Torah*, for *Sha'ul* as a Jew, meant the complete revealed will of ADONAI in the universe, in nature, and in human society. He explained this to his disciple Timothy: *16 All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for restoration, and for training in righteousness, 17 so that the person belonging to God may be capable, fully equipped for every good deed.* (2Timothy 3:16-17 TLV). When he said this, he was referring to the *Tanakh*, the Hebrew Bible, the only Scripture in existence at that time. What this means is that all of Yeshua's disciples saw and accepted Him as Messiah based upon what they saw in the Hebrew Bible.

But, what and how many are ADONAI's commands? The answer appears to be determined by whom you ask. *Rabbi Simlai* of the third century said: "Six hundred and thirteen commandments were delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai; three hundred and sixty-five of which are prohibitive laws, corresponding to the number of days of the solar year, whilst the remaining two hundred and forty-eight are affirmative injunctions, being as numerous as the limbs constituting the human body." Regarding the 613, he said: "David came and reduced them to eleven as it said: 'L-rd who shall abide in thy tabernacle?'" And, David lists the eleven in Psalm 15. "Then Isaiah came and reduced them to six...." And, Isaiah lists them in 33:15. "Then Micah came and reduced them to two." Isaiah summarizes what Micah said in Isaiah 56: 1. "Whilst *Habakkuk* reduced them to one, as it is said: 'But the just shall live by his faith.'" (Habakkuk 2).

But, even though those servants of G-d have summarized the whole *Torah* into, 11, 6, 2, and 1 commandments, it does not mean that we are to ignore the 613 individually found there. In the *B'rit Chadashah*, someone has counted and found there to be 1050 *mitzvot* in it, and we should be aware of these as well. How are we to relate to all of these commandments? The term "under the law" is used by some who erroneously believe that Yeshua's followers in Messianic Judaism rely on keeping laws for their salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth. We do have to consider the commands themselves, but in no way do we depend upon them for our salvation, our justification. Our justification, our

promise of salvation, depends only upon our trust, our faith in Yeshua's sacrifice as payment for our sins. But, once that is done and we have become members of ADONAI's New Covenant which He made with Israel, our covenant responsibilities begin. But, in this covenant relationship, it is not that we obey just because we're supposed to, because we have to, but out of love for ADONAI and Yeshua, because "we get to," our reciprocation of their love for us.

We must also consider the names which we use to refer to ADONAI, the Father. In the third commandment, He said: 7 *"You must not take the Name of Adonai your God in vain, for Adonai will not hold him guiltless that takes His Name in vain."* (Exodus 20:7 TLV). The Complete Jewish Bible renders it as: *"7 You are not to use lightly the name of Adonai your God, because Adonai will not leave unpunished someone who uses his name lightly."* (Exodus 20:7 CJB). Name refers to the "name of G-d," the Father, known as the *tetragrammaton*, יהוה, *Yod Heh Vav Heh*, ADONAI's four letter name in the Hebrew text. Our understanding of this verse is that, at least in part, we should not take His name lightly by pronouncing it when we don't know the correct pronunciation. In fact, no one knows the correct pronunciation today. Two thousand years ago, during the Temple period, it was only pronounced on one day in the year, *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, and then only by the *Kohen Gadol*, the High Priest. In the Hebrew text, it does seem to be true that David and other early followers addressed ADONAI by His name, but some time before the Temple period, that usage was discontinued and after the Temple period, its pronunciation was lost, presumably because of the dispersion of the Levitical priesthood. It is still true, that we do not know how to pronounce it today, or even the number of syllables which it should have. Some say two and some say three.

Some modern followers of Yeshua have felt that they would draw nearer to God if they could only call him by His name. Early Christian Bible translators tried to do this when they discovered the Masoretic Text, a Hebrew text written between 600 and 1000 CE. Fearing that the pronunciation of Hebrew words, a system of words containing only consonants would be lost, the *Masoretes* devised a system of marks called "vowel points," signifying vowel sounds to be applied to individual letters. To early non-Jewish translators, the markings placed on יהוה, *YHVH*, seemed to indicate a pronunciation of *YeHoVah*. Later, when the *Torah* was translated into Latin, the Y was changed to J, but still pronounced Y in Latin. Many years later, others began to pronounce the J sound and the word, *Jehovah*, came about. But, that is not what the vowel points indicated. Since the name YHVH is not pronounced, it is Jewish custom when writing Hebrew with vowel points, to place the vowel points for ADONAI, meaning "my L-rd," on YHVH. This indicates to the reader that he is not to pronounce YHVH, but to instead say ADONAI. Because those translators did not know Jewish tradition, they came up with a totally erroneous name. In our congregation, we follow the Jewish practice of substituting a symbolic word for the *tetragrammaton*. We generally use ADONAI, meaning "my L-rd," as does the Tree of Life Version of the Bible. We may also sometimes say *HaShem*, meaning "The Name" as those in Orthodox Judaism do. In the Greek text of the writings of Yeshua's disciples, ADONAI becomes *Kyrios*, translated L-rd, which is also sometimes used to refer to Yeshua. In the Greek text, there is one usage of *HaShem* found. It was used by Yeshua's disciple John who wrote: 5 *Loved ones, you are acting faithfully in whatever you do for the brethren and especially for strangers. 6 They have testified to your love before Messiah's community. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. 7 For on behalf of the Name they went out, accepting nothing from the pagans.* (3John 1:5-7 TLV). This is referring to Yeshua's followers led by Gaius in Asia Minor, who went out in ministry on behalf of *HaShem*, *YHVH*.

Regarding *Torah*, the Greek text of Romans 10:4 is often mistranslated to read, “For Messiah is the end of the Law...” instead of, “for Messiah is the aim (or goal) of the *Torah*...” What else would you think if you read this verse in the King James Version? *4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.* (Romans 10:4 KJV). There are many who believe it in just that way, believing that when Yeshua died, he ended the following of the Law. But, *Sha’ul* certainly does not project the thought that *Torah* has ended. His surrounding words support Strong’s Online Concordance description of the Greek word *telos* which is used here: #**5056** *télos* (a neuter noun) – properly, consummation (the *end-goal, purpose*), such as *closure with all its results*. The Tree of Life Version correctly interprets this verse: *4 For Messiah is the goal of the Torah as a means to righteousness for everyone who keeps trusting.* (Romans 10:4 TLV). The goal of the *Torah* is to lead one to righteousness through Yeshua and that is exactly what it did for Yeshua’s disciples and many others of His day. *Sha’ul* does not imply that *Torah* has ended and makes a very strong affirmation regarding its ongoing efficacy in several verses. In Romans 3 he says: *30 Since God is One, He will set right the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then nullify the Torah through faithfulness? May it never be! On the contrary, we uphold the Torah.* (Romans 3:30-31 TLV). If *Sha’ul* wrote that the Law was done away with, as some contend, he is either a schizophrenic or some of his interpreters have misinterpreted what he wrote.

It is important for us to understand that the original intention of the *Torah* was not to provide a means of salvation, but a way of life for those who were already redeemed. The Jews of the 1<sup>st</sup> century were a redeemed people because ADONAI redeemed Israel from Egypt and entered into a covenant with them afterward. As a redeemed people they had to follow the *Torah* of the covenant. And, as long as they offered the appropriate sacrifices and as long as the High Priest took their sins to ADONAI for forgiveness on *Yom Kippur* they continued to be a part of the redeemed community. In this system which ADONAI established, they received atonement one year at the time. But it was not to last forever.

The writer of Hebrews explains this for us. He wrote: *8 ... , He says, “Behold, days are coming, says Adonai, when I will inaugurate a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.* (Hebrews 8:8b TLV). He is quoting Jeremiah 31:30 about the New Covenant. It, the New Covenant, was inaugurated more than thirty years before the writing of Hebrews. The covenant was cut when Yeshua died on the cross in about 30 CE as an eternal sacrifice for our sins. In the last verse of chapter 8, the writer of Hebrews declares: *13 In saying “new,” He has treated the first as old; but what is being made old and aging is close to vanishing.* (Hebrews 8:13 TLV). That is what is accurately translated from the Greek text. What is the “first” that is being treated as “old?” It is the Levitical priesthood. This chapter, Hebrews chapter 8, is introduced with these verses: *1 Now here is the main point being said. We do have such a Kohen Gadol, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. 2 He is a priestly attendant of the Holies and the true Tent—which Adonai set up, not man.* (Hebrews 8:1-2 TLV). If you are reading verse 13 in a different version, you may find that the word “covenant” has been inserted. The King James Version reads: *13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.* (Hebrews 8:13 KJV). The word “covenant” is not found in the Greek text. The translators have added it. We understand Hebrews 8:13 in this way: “In saying ‘new priesthood,’ He has treated the ‘first priesthood’ (Levitical Priesthood) as old and what is old is aging and close to vanishing.” And, that is exactly what was happening at that time. At the time that Hebrews was written, sometime after 49 CE and probably no later than 65 CE, the Temple was standing and the Levitical priests were

offering sacrifices in it. This text tells us that the Levitical priesthood was aging, growing old, and just a few years later it vanished. When the Romans destroyed the Temple in the year 70, over a period of years the priesthood disbanded, no longer needed without a place in which to minister. But, at the time of the writing of the Book of Hebrews, there was a Levitical priesthood still present along with a new *Kohen HaGadol*, a new High Priest, who had taken their place. He is Yeshua, who assumed His office when He rose from the dead and ascended to His Father in heaven and as *Kohen HaGadol*, placed His own atoning blood in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle in heaven.

But, after Yeshua died as our sin sacrifice, was Israel as a whole still a redeemed people? My understanding is that they were not. They remained in covenant with ADONAI through the Abrahamic Covenant, the promise of the Land of Israel, but there is no redemption in that covenant. What I am about to say may shock you. We know that our Messianic Movement is not monolithic. We all believe that Yeshua is Messiah and then the diversity begins. Some say Yeshua did away with *Torah*, some say He didn't. Some say Anti-Christ is coming, some say there is no Anti-Christ. I believe that's why *Sha'ul* wrote "we all see through a glass darkly" in a chapter about love. (1Corinthians 13). Love is the key until Yeshua returns to explain everything to us. Daniel prophesied of Yeshua when he wrote: 27 *Then he will make a firm covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.* (Daniel 9:27a TLV). Some say that this refers to the Anti-Christ, but I am confident that it refers to Yeshua and that there is no physical Anti-Christ coming. (Read *Daniel Unsealed* <https://goodnewsforjews.org/>). By cutting the New Covenant, Yeshua ended the effectiveness of sacrifices made by Levitical priests by dying on the cross in the middle of the week. Although the Levitical offerings could no longer bring atonement, sacrifices continued to be offered from 30 CE, the year Yeshua died, until 70 CE when the Temple was destroyed. That is what Hebrews 8:13 is all about, the aging and eventual end of the Levitical sacrificial system. But, we also note that during this time, Yeshua's disciples continued to honor ADONAI's system administered through the Covenant at Sinai. They attended Temple and synagogue services and *Sha'ul* even purified himself for a Nazirite vow and paid for sacrifices for himself and four men. He did this to demonstrate to the Jews of Jerusalem that he had not taught Jews to abandon *Torah* and that he, himself followed *Torah*. (see Acts 21:21-24). What all this tells us is that the ending of the Levitical priesthood and Temple worship did not end either the purpose or efficacy of *Torah*.

In the Judaism of the last two centuries before the common era and through the first century of the common era, the *Torah* came to be viewed in an absolute sense, independent of the covenant. This was due in part to the laxity of the priesthood as ruled by the Party of the Sadducees. Because of this laxness, the Party of the Pharisees grew into an even more powerful entity in support of the importance of the *Torah*. According to them, fulfillment of the *Torah* determined membership in the people of God. *Sha'ul* does not criticize ADONAI's *Torah*, but he does criticize the attitude of some individuals toward it. He was not saying that *Torah* was a bad thing, just that it is insufficient to keep a person from judgement. His teachings reject the rabbinical emphasis of that time on justification through works of the Law. That was not the intention of Scripture. As Messianic followers of Yeshua, we must not fall back into that trap. We must affirm the original intent of the *Torah* as a guide for godly living for both Jews and Gentiles after salvation, an intent which has not changed today. I am a Gentile and a large percentage of the members of Messianic Judaism are Gentile. Consider *Sha'ul's* closing words in his letter to the congregation at Rome: 25 *Now to the One who is able to strengthen you according to my Good News and the proclamation of Yeshua the Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret*

*for long ages 26 but now is revealed and through the Writings of the Prophets has been made known to all the nations, according to the commandment of the eternal God to bring about obedience of faith*— (Romans 16:25-26 TLV). We focus on the portion I underlined and which is essentially the way it is also translated in the New International Version. The Greek word underlying faith is *pistis*, which according to Online Strong's means faith or faithfulness, the Greek counterpart of the Hebrew *emunah*, אֱמוּנָה, meaning the same thing. The question is, which of the two words do we use to translate this? The answer is – both, faith and faithfulness! *Emun*, the verb root of *emunah* is used regarding Abraham's faith: *6 Then he believed in Adonai and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.* (Genesis 15:6 TLV). Both meanings are also expressed in Habakkuk's statement: *4 Behold, the puffed up one— his soul is not right within him, But the righteous will live by his trust.* (Habakkuk 2:4 TLV). Both words, faith and faithfulness, are also expressed in *Sha'ul's* closing words to the Roman congregation. Our life consists of faith or trust, a belief in Yeshua as Messiah, but also afterward as faithfulness to the teaching and instruction of *Torah* with its commands. This thought by *Sha'ul* is better expressed by the Complete Jewish Bible: *26 but manifested now through prophetic writings, in keeping with the command of God the Eternal, and communicated to all the Gentiles to promote in them trust-grounded obedience* — (Romans 16:26 CJB). I've again underlined the part we are interpreting. "Trust-grounded obedience" describes the completeness of the Greek *pistis* and the Hebrew *emunah* for a better understanding of what *Sha'ul* meant. For Gentiles, as well as for Jews, *Sha'ul* wrote that our trust, our faith in Yeshua, is anchored by our obedience to His *Torah*.

No discussion of the Jewishness of Yeshua would be complete without the following discussion: *1 In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 All things were made through Him, and apart from Him nothing was made that has come into being.* (John 1:1-3 TLV). In the beginning, the Word, the *logos* in Greek, was with G-d and was G-d. He, "the Word," is Yeshua. *Logos*, meaning reason, is personified in Yeshua and expresses the divine order in the universe. The words "In the beginning" lead us to Genesis chapter one and creation: *1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* (Genesis 1:1 TLV). G-d, *Elohim* in Hebrew, is a reference to Yeshua, the Creator of everything. *Sha'ul* agreed with John regarding this and described Yeshua in even greater detail: *16 "For by Him (Yeshua) all things were created— in heaven and on earth, the seen and the unseen, whether thrones or angelic powers or rulers or authorities. All was created through Him and for Him."* (Colossians 1:16 TLV).

But, there is a great mystery here, one which we will not fully understand until Yeshua comes back to earth. It is that there is One G-d, but He has a Son, Yeshua, who created everything. The mystery of the G-dhead is that they are *echad*, one. *Echad* is referred to as a compound oneness, more than one in relationship. Another example is that in marriage a man and wife become *basar echad*, one flesh, two people, yet one. Traditional Judaism believes that *YHVH*, *HaShem*, is a single oneness. But, that declaration is not found in Scripture. There is a Hebrew word for complete oneness, *yachid* (Genesis 22:2), which means only, but it is not applied to ADONAI. Nowhere in Scripture is ADONAI described as *yachid*, a solitary one. Scripture says: *4 "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."* (Deuteronomy 6:4 TLV). The Hebrew behind "one" is *echad*. Within the compound oneness of *echad* is *HaAv*, the Father, *HaBen*, the Son and *Ruach HaKodesh*, the Holy Spirit. They are "one G-d" as expressed by the word *echad*. But, there is a place where "oneness" is applied to Yeshua, G-d's only Son. It is in John 3:16, a Scripture familiar to all of us: *16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16 TLV). The Greek *monogenés* (mon-og-en-ace')



translated, “only begotten,” is the equivalent of the Hebrew *yachid* meaning “only” as applied to Isaac, Abraham’s son in Genesis 22:2.

But, we cannot separate *Torah* from Yeshua. He discussed it in His Sermon on the Mount. He said: 17 “*Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets! I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.*” (Matthew 5:17 TLV). What this means is widely misunderstood. To begin with, Yeshua’s statement is a Jewish idiom which was in use in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. He was speaking idiomatically. Abolish means to incorrectly interpret while fulfill means to correctly interpret. Using a 1<sup>st</sup> century Hebraism, Yeshua clearly said that *Torah* remains in effect and that He came to correctly interpret it. But many still believe that Yeshua fulfilled the Law, thereby cancelling it for them. This is what is known as an antinomian view of Scripture, the view that Law has been done away with. But, Yeshua continued by saying: 18 “*Amen, I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or serif shall ever pass away from the Torah until all things come to pass.*” (Matthew 5: 18 TLV). This demonstrates the validity of *Torah* for us today as expressed by our Messiah.

Antinomianism is a result of a faulty understanding of grace and the New Covenant which Yeshua mediated. *Sha’ul*, who received his knowledge directly from Yeshua on the Damascus Road said: 1 “*What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may abound?*” (Romans 6:1 TLV). The answer is, no, we don’t continue to sin so that grace can abound. He then goes on to say: 14 “*For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!*” (Romans 6:14-15 TLV). *Sha’ul* had previously explained the purpose of the *Torah* in Romans chapter 3: 20 “*For no human, on the basis of Torah observance, will be set right in His sight—for through the Torah comes awareness of sin.*” (Romans 3:20 TLV). That’s very clear: “We can’t obtain righteousness by obeying the Laws found within ADONAI’s *Torah*.” We can’t be saved by works of any kind. *Sha’ul* is correct. We believe that! You can’t work your way to heaven. But, continuing his discussion, *Sha’ul* said: 28 “*For we consider a person to be set right apart from Torah observance. 29 Is God the God of the Jewish people only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. 30 Since God is One, He will set right the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.*” (Romans 3:28-30 TLV). This makes it even clearer. Being set right apart from *Torah* observance means salvation through faith in Yeshua. That’s G-d’s grace, a gift that we did not earn and do not deserve. But, after all that, *Sha’ul* concluded: 31 “*Do we then nullify the Torah through faithfulness? May it never be! On the contrary, we uphold the Torah.*” (Romans 3:31 TLV).

What does “upholding *Torah*” mean? What *Sha’ul* teaches is that *Torah* is our guide. It is ADONAI’s way, Yeshua’s way, of teaching us how to live under His principles. This is confirmed by John, the same John who affirmed Yeshua as Creator. He said: 3 “*For this is the love of God—that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.*” (1John 5:3 TLV). The Ten Commandments are His commandments, but so also are all of the other commandments in the *Torah*, the five books of Moses, and also those in the writings of Yeshua’s disciples. But, not all are applicable to us today. ADONAI has put on hold a large portion of them through the Roman destruction of the Temple in the year 70. They are still in His Word, the *Torah*, as Yeshua said, “until heaven and earth pass away,” but presently inactive. They are “every commandment which requires the Temple and Levitical priesthood to be carried out.” They are inactive for us today because they “can’t be carried out.” Whether ADONAI will ever make them active again, we don’t know. Also inactive for us are the commands which can be observed today, but only in Israel. We’re not

there and are not expected to obey them. What are the commands that are for us today? That's for us to determine as disciples of Yeshua. To find out, we must do what *Sha'ul* taught Timothy: 15 *Make every effort to present yourself before God as tried and true, as an unashamed worker cutting a straight path with the word of truth.* (2Timothy 2:15 TLV). We're expected to be students of the Word and to search these things out.

We are no longer under the Levitical priesthood, but now under the Priesthood of *Yeshua HaMashiach*, an everlasting priesthood after the order of *Malkitzedek*. Our High Priest, Yeshua, is the Mediator of the New Covenant which ADONAI made with Israel about which He said: 32 "*But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days*" —it is a declaration of Adonai— "*I will put My Torah within them. Yes, I will write it on their heart. I will be their God and they will be My people.*" (Jeremiah 31:32 TLV). This covenant was made with Israel, but is open to both Jews and non-Jews. We must accept Yeshua, the Mediator of the covenant, as a sacrifice for our sins in order to become a covenant member. Yeshua has written His *Torah* on our hearts. The desire to be faithful to Him and His words are within those of us who have trusted Him. As we read earlier in Matthew 5:18, our obedience to His active commands shall not pass away before heaven and earth pass away! These are Yeshua's instructions to those of us who are covenant members of the New Covenant. The commands relating to Temple and Levitical priesthood are still in *Torah*, but inactive. It may be ADONAI's plan to once again make them active when Yeshua returns as King Messiah and the description of a Temple in the Book of Ezekiel makes us wonder.

Yeshua, our Jewish Messiah, the author of *Torah*, is not antinomian, but upholds all of *Torah* and the Prophets. As His *talmidim*, His disciples, we are expected to embody in our lives, the principles set forth in the Greek word *pistis* and the Hebrew word *emunah*. As Yeshua's *talmidim*, His disciples, we begin with faith, faith in our Messiah, and continue with faithfulness to all which He has commanded us. How do we get there? Our congregation logo, Hear, Trust, Obey is a very brief depiction of how to become ADONAI's faithful servant and a citizen of heaven. Hear ADONAI's Word, the *Besorah*, the Good News of Yeshua!. Trust in Yeshua! Lovingly obey His commands! That is the whole of the matter. Our fervent prayer for today and always is tht all of Israel will soon trust in their Messiah and that Yeshua's Kingdom will soon come to earth. *Marana'ta* Yeshua! *Shalom aleichem!*

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