

Introduction

Part 4

Scriptural evidence for Torah and the Gospel Message

Obviously the Torah and the Messiah are connected! We conclude this from the Messiah's words saying, *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."* (Matthew 5:17) The prophet Isaiah calls out to the people of Israel to listen to the Lord saying, *"Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live."* (Isaiah 55:3). To listen in this case is the word שָׁמַעוּ meaning to hear. To hear the Lord -- actually hearing the Lord, means that one must pay attention to what the Lord is saying. This is paralleled to the everlasting covenant and life (Isaiah 55:3 *Give ear and come to me (וּלְכוּ אֵלַי); listen (שָׁמַעוּ), that you may live (וַתְּחִי בְּפִשְׁכֶּם).* *I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. NIV*) Note how Isaiah suggests this is due to the faithful mercies the Lord God has shown to David. This draws in idea of David's merits, and his way of life as an example to us that we are to always listen to the word of the Lord, to act upon it, and to repent when we have sinned. This is explained in Isaiah's statement, *55:6 Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. 55:8 'For My*

thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' declares the Lord. (NASB) Notice how wickedness is paralleled to how one lives life (our ways) and unrighteousness is paralleled to our thoughts. Repentance includes both of these things. The Lord allows a certain amount of time for repentance. Once we have passed that time, there is little hope. The Lord is compassionate and merciful to forgive. The Lord says through Isaiah, *55:10 'For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. (NASB)* This parallels the Psalmist in *Tehillim / Psalms 138:8* when the Psalmist states the Lord will accomplish what concerns him. *Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 55:3 Part 2 and 3* states the following:

Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 55:3 Part 2

And your soul shall live. That is, your soul shall live for ever after the death of the body, or you will receive new life through Messiah, when you will return to the Divine Law.

Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 55:3 Part 3

An everlasting covenant, that will never expire. The sure mercy of David, that is, like the covenant which I made with David and the kindness which I showed to him, promising him my mercy will I keep for him for evermore, etc. (Ps. 89:29). It is also possible, that by David in this verse Messiah is meant, who will be of the family of David; as the prophet is sometimes called Israel for the same reason; and the meaning of הנאמנים חסדי דוד is in that case: for the kindness of Messiah is sure.

Ibn Ezra believes in the afterlife saying the soul will live forever after the death of the body. He also states that we will receive “*new life through the Messiah*” when one returns to the Torah (see Part 2) and this is the kindness of the Messiah (see Part 3). This is a rabbinic

teaching on how the Torah and the Messiah are connected. The concept of having new life through the Messiah is related to having faith, and receiving new life in Him when one returns to the Torah is related to being faithful to God according to His Word and most importantly, recognizing it is the Lord God Almighty who is working in our hearts to return to His ways, by the power of God's Spirit. Ibn Ezra's commentary states *"for the kindness of Messiah is sure. This explanation is supported by the next verse,"* 55:4 *'Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, A leader and commander for the peoples. (NASB)* This parallels the NT descriptions of the Messiah Yeshua. We do not have to doubt who Yeshua is as the Messiah of God and His purpose to lead us in righteousness, holiness, and truth, and by faith in his life and his merits we have eternal life. If we truly believe this, we will apply these truths and Yeshua's way of life to ours, for the glory of God.

In *Tehillim / Psalms 141:1-10*, the psalm opens saying, א מְזִמּוֹר לְדוֹד יְהוָה קְרָאתִיךָ חוֹשֶׁה לִי הַאֲזִינָה קוֹלִי בְקִרְאֵי-לְךָ: ב תִּפְּוֹן תִּפְּלְתִי קִטְרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ מִשְׁאֵת כְּפִי מִנְחַת-עֶרֶב: ג שִׁיתָה יְהוָה שְׁמֶרָה לְפִי נִצְרָה עַל-
 141:1 *O Lord, I call upon You; hasten to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to You! 141:2 May my prayer be counted as incense before You; The lifting up of my hands as the evening offering. 141:3 Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips. (NASB)* The psalmist begins with calling upon the name of the Lord. The Aramaic Targum states, א תושבחתא לדוד יהוה קריתך חיש חשחיש לי אצית קלי במקרי לך: ב תתכוון צלותי היך קטורת בוסמין קדמך זקפות ידי בצלו היך דורון בסים דמתקרר ברמש: ג שווי יהוה מטרא לפומי נטר
 141:1 *A psalm of David. O Lord, I have called you; be concerned for me, hear my voice when I call to you. 141:2 Let my prayer be directed before you like incense of spices, the upraising of my hands in prayer like a fragrant gift offered at evening. 141:3 Place, O Lord, a guard on my mouth, a keeper on the portal of my lips. (EMC)* The Apostle Paul frames his words in similar form while speaking to the Romans saying, *Romans 10:13 Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. (RSV)* Many people today are teaching within Christianity that an individual can be saved merely by professing a belief in Jesus. Both Paul and Peter stated *"Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved"* (*Acts 2:21, Romans 10:13, Joel 2:32*). It is

important to note also what Yeshua pointed out saying, “*Not everyone who says to me “Lord Lord” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*” (Matthew 7:21 and Luke 6:46) Many today equate “*calling on the name of the Lord*” with the idea of saying “*Lord save me.*” The question is how can one say they are saved simply by “*calling out to Christ*” when the Messiah Himself said that the mere calling upon the name will not save a person? The key to understanding the meaning behind what Peter and Paul are saying, “*calling on the name of the Lord,*” is to recognize that more is involved in this action of repentance and calling upon the name of the Lord. This is not merely a petition directed toward God. This is part of the process of Teshuvah (Repentance), seeking the Lord, and turning from sin. This is what is being explained by the author of the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 3:8-4:3

3:8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 3:9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 3:10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. 3:11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; 3:15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. 3:16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. 3:17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 3:18 And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 3:19 So

we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. 4:3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. (KJV)

What the author of Hebrews is teaching us here in *Hebrews 4* is the generation in the wilderness was given the gospel message but it did not benefit them because they did not unite their having heard the gospel with faith (being faithful). The author of Hebrews claims the gospel message that was preached to us was the same as that what was preached to them. This is a very interesting statement! Modern church teaching today is the gospel message is something new that Jesus brought to us. However, based upon what the author of Hebrews is saying, the gospel is something that is very ancient that was given to God's people back during the giving of His Torah. The gospel message is connected to the Torah and it is within this context that we will try to understand how the gospel message connects to the Torah in this Torah series

Back to the topic of "*calling upon the name,*" even in modern times, when one calls upon someone, it generally means he is doing more than simply making a request. For example, when a medical doctor goes in to meet his patients, he does not merely walk into the room, announce he is there, ask the patient how he is doing, and then hopes the best for him and turns and leaves. On the contrary, he examines the patient, listens to him, gives instructions for what to do, how to live, what to eat, exercise (physical therapy), and recovery information, which includes the prescription of medication and plenty of rest, etc. This is a fantastic example of repentance. All of these things are understood under the context of calling upon someone in modern times, in this case calling upon a patient or a doctor. When a person takes the time to study this expression in both ancient and modern contexts, we learn that it is used

to mean much more than simply the making of a request. This phrase has a much deeper meaning, “*calling upon God*” is to make an appeal which involves both parties, the one making the appeal and the Lord God Himself, where both take action. Take for example what Paul said when he was talking to Festus in regards to his incarceration.

Acts 25:9-12

25:9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, ‘Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these charges ‘ 25:10 But Paul said, ‘I am standing before Caesar’s tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know. 25:11 ‘If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar.’ 25:12 Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, ‘You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go.’ (NASB)

Paul said “*I appeal unto Caesar*” using the word epikaloumai (see also *Acts 2:21* and *Romans 10:13*), here Paul was not simply calling on Caesar to save him. Paul claimed the right of a Roman citizen and therefore to be heard by Caesar. He asked that his case be transferred to Caesar’s court and have his case judged by Caesar. This means that he was submitting to whatever was necessary in order for his case to be brought before Caesar. In doing so, Paul was submitting his life to the formal procedures that were required in order for him to come before Caesar and his court for judgment. This involved obedience. This was not a mere verbal recognition of Caesar. Similarly, as in the case of “*calling upon the name of the Lord*” we are not merely making a verbal recognition, or a verbal petition only. We are declaring our intentions that involve obedience and change. Note how God’s people are described as a people “*who call on Your Name*” where we are not a people who only pray to God, but those who are serving the Lord, and who, by obedience, are submitting our lives to His authority (see

Matthew 28:18). James speaks of this kind of thing in *James 2*, that our love is demonstrated by the works that we do for others and for the Lord.

The prophet Zephaniah states, *3:9 For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one accord. (KJV)* Notice how Zephaniah connects calling upon the name to one who serves the Lord. When one submits his life and will to do the will of God, he is described as “*calling on the Lord.*” Looking at *Acts 2:21* and *Romans 10:9* and *10:13*:

Acts 2:21

2:21 ‘And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ (NASB)

Romans 10:9-16

10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 10:11 For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.’ 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 10:13 for ‘Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ 10:14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 10:15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!’ 10:16 However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’ (NASB)

What is described here as “*calling on the Lord*” in *Acts 2:21* and *Romans 10:9* and *10:13* does not contradict *Matthew 7:21*. Paul explains this saying, *10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in*

righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. (NASB) Note what he says, with the heart a person believes resulting in righteousness. That which leads to righteousness, this refers to one who submits his life to the Lord according to His Word. To “*call on the Lord*” entails more than just pleading for salvation; it involves submitting one’s life to God’s will (to His Word). According to *Colossians 3:17*, every single thing we do (in word or deed) is to be carried out in the Messiah. In order to obtain salvation, a person must submit to the Lord’s authority in his or her life. This is what is being taught in passages like *Acts 2:21* and *Romans 10:9-16*. This is why Paul wrote, *10:15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!’ 10:16 However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’* (NASB) Paul says in his letter to the Romans, “*however they did not heed the good news...*” To heed is a reference to listening, and “*to listen*” is a reference to obedience.

What is it about the “*good news*” that is to be heeded/obeyed as Paul is explaining here?

Modern theology would have us believe this is just asking for salvation in Jesus name. The Lord is working in our lives to empower us to overcome sin according to His Word. This is the point and purpose of the Lord sending His Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts. That He would dwell in our midst, that He would influence our lives, and that He would empower us to overcome the world just as Yeshua did, and having victory over sin and death!

David wrote in *Tehillim / Psalms 147:10-20* saying, יֵט מִגִּיד דְּבָרָו, [דְּבָרָיו] לְיַעֲקֹב חֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל: כ לֹא עָשָׂה כֵן | לְכָל-גּוֹי וּמִשְׁפָּטִים: 147:19 *He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. 147:20 He has not dealt thus with any nation; And as for His ordinances, they have not known them. Praise the Lord!*(NASB) The psalmist speaks of the Lord declaring His statutes and judgments (חֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו) to Israel and speaks of His having not

done so to the nations who do not know Him by his ordinances. This speaks of an intimate knowledge the people of God have who know who He is by His commands. When we live our lives for the Lord God of Israel, we grow to know Him in a more intimate way! There is a parallel here to what Paul wrote to Timothy in *1 Timothy 1*.

1 Timothy 1:5-20

1:5 But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 1:6 For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, 1:7 wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions. 1:8 But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, 1:9 realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers 1:10 and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, 1:11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted. 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, 1:13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; 1:14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. 1:15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. 1:16 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the

*only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.
1:18 This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son,
in accordance with the prophecies previously made con-
cerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, 1:19
keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have
rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.
1:20 Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom
I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught
not to blaspheme. (NASB)*

Notice here what Paul is saying, he speaks of the Torah as instructing us in love from a pure heart and a good conscience that is coupled to a sincere faith. He speaks of others who stray from this truth teaching the Torah with a hatred as opposed to having love and mercy for one another. He then makes a very important statement saying, *1:8 But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, 1:9 realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers 1:10 and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, 1:11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted. (NASB)* Paul's letter to Timothy goes a long way to explaining how in Christ we are no longer "under the law" as per what he is saying here, *1:9 realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers (NASB).* Paul writes speaking of the Torah and calls this description of the Torah as being good and for the rebellious person and this being the gospel message that had been entrusted to him. This parallels *Hebrews 4* that speaks of the people in the wilderness who received the gospel message but refused to take hold of it because of their sin. The Torah is a fundamental and foundational part of the gospel message! This is why the Psalmist stated what he did saying, *יֵט מִגִּיד דְּבָרָו [דְּבָרָיו] לְיַעֲקֹב הַחֲקִיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל: כ לֹא עָשָׂה כֵן | לְכָל-גּוֹי דְּבָרָו: 147:19 He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. 147:20 He has not dealt thus*

with any nation; And as for His ordinances, they have not known them. Praise the Lord!(NASB) We know our Father God in heaven if we believe in and follow His Messiah Yeshua by walking in their footsteps. This is a fundamental concept here of knowing someone when we walk along side of him/her. Only then do we truly know and understand a person and what they have gone through. This is how God designed it, and is the reason the living Word of God came to dwell amongst men, for the purpose of drawing near to us so that we in turn may draw nearer to God according to His Word!

This study (Part 4) is by far not an exhaustive analysis on the Scriptural support for the Torah and the Gospel Message. We have only touched a couple verses that show how the Torah is a part of the gospel message. Based upon what we know, what we see here is how the History and theologies we are taught shape our presuppositions and philosophical beliefs where these things shape our perception of reality (truth). This leads to the questions we ask about life and spiritual matters, and the questions we ask are shaped by the assumptions, the expectations of the hypothesis and theories we embrace and ultimately the theologies and doctrines we hold onto. The idea of coming to the truth is a universal principle and the reason there is so much variation in biblical interpretation. The difficulty however is to find a set of assumptions that we can all agree upon that leads to correct conclusions. If we are taught a half truth, we may never come to the understanding of What God wants for us in our lives according to His Holy Word. Based upon our assessment from a biblical and historical perspective, the Torah is a fundamental part of the gospel message! Therefore it is important to hold onto a Torah centric hermeneutic when exercising biblical interpretation.