

פרשת
במדבר
Parashat Bamidbar

Bamidbar / Numbers 1:1-4:20, Hosea 2:1-22
Luke 16:1-17:10

A Doctrine of Demons

According to this week's Torah portion, we read the following in *Bamidbar / Numbers 3:12-13*, יב וְאֲנִי הִנֵּה לְקַחְתִּי אֶת-הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תַּחַת כָּל-בְּכוֹר פֶּטֶר רֶחֶם מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיוּ לִי הַלְוִיִּם: יג כִּי לִי כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּיוֹם הַכֹּתִי כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הַקְדַּשְׁתִּי לִי כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: 3:12 *'Now, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of every firstborn, the first issue of the womb among the sons of Israel. So the Levites shall be Mine. 3:13 'For all the firstborn are Mine; on the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, from man to beast. They shall be Mine; I am the Lord.'* (NASB) Here the Lord God tells Moshe and us how He had chosen people from among the sons of Israel separating and sanctifying certain people to Himself. Specifically the first born of Israel by the example of striking down all of the first born in Egypt. Here the Lord also singles out the Levites as the one's who will perform the services in the Tabernacle for all generations. Rashi's commentary states the following concerning the children of Israel, the first born, and the Levites mentioned here in *Bamidbar / Numbers 3:12*.

Rashi on Bamidbar / Numbers 3:12 Part 1

וְאֵנִי הִנֵּה לְקַחְתִּי *AND I, BEHOLD I HAVE TAKEN [THE LEVITES FROM AMONG THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL] — This means: And I — whence do “I” claim the right on them from among the children of Israel, that the Israelites should have to hire them (cf. Rashi on v. 8) for My service? It is through the firstborn — to whom I surely have a title — that I have a claim on them (the Levites) and so I take them in their (the firstborns’) stead. For originally the service (the priestly functions) was performed by the firstborn, but when they (the Israelites and among them their firstborn too) sinned by worshiping the golden calf they became disqualified, and the Levites who had not worshiped the idol were chosen in their stead (cf. Zevachim 112b).*

Based upon Rashi’s commentary and many references from the Talmud, Mishnah, and Midrashim, the first born were those who were to be the priest of the family bringing the sacrifices before the Lord on behalf of the other persons in one’s family. This illustrates the important role of the first born son. Here the rabbinic opinion on the choice of the Levi was due to the sin of the golden calf, this disqualified the first born sons to work in the Tabernacle. The Levites were the only one’s who had not worshiped the idol, and so they were chosen from among the people to draw near to the Lord in the Temple services. In the opening passages of the book of Shemot / Exodus, we are told the first born of Israel was killed in Egypt with Moshe being saved. The the service of God in the Tabernacle coupled with the Egyptian mandate to kill the first born singles these as the one’s who would serve as role models for others, and the wellspring of the Messiah (those among whom God would choose a deliverer). The Lord God sanctifying them places them in this elevated position of drawing near to the Lord, but due to avoda zara (idol worship), this disqualified the first born sons from this spiritual blessing. Due to sin, the first born sons were then to live their lives on a more mundane level than that which they had originally been called to. This speaks of the significance of avoiding idolatry, placing idols in our hearts that would lead us away

from spending more time with God in our lives. This is why the biblical mandate was made concerning the first born saying, וְכֹל בְּכוֹר אָדָם תִּפְדֶּה תִּפְדֶּה *“And every first born male you are to redeem.”* (*Shemot / Exodus 13:13*). The idea is these verses were not written prior to the sin of the golden calf, and the redemption of the first born had already been subjected to redemption at this time, being not fit to offer sacrificial offerings. Because of these things, we read about *“redemption”* in *Shemot / Exodus 13:13* that tells us how the first born were permitted to live a regular lifestyle, they would not be performing services in the Temple. Note how this draws in the concept of the type of lives we should be living as a people who are chosen, holy, righteous, redeemed, and sanctified in the Messiah Yeshua. The rabbis say without *“redemption”* every object that has been sanctified is out of bounds for any mundane use whether passive or active, as it would constitute a demeaning of its holiness which is given of God. (see *Talmud Bavli Chulin 137*) This is where the concept of *“being in the world but not of the world”* comes from as a warning against unfaithfulness, drawing us right back to the Torah based incident of the golden calf and the people of Israel. (*John 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. NASB*)

In addition to this, we read the following according to *Vayikra / Leviticus 1:5-15* ה וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר יַעֲמְדוּ אִתְּכֶם לְרֵאוּבֵן אֵלִיזוּר בֶּן-שִׁדְיָאוּר: ו לְשִׁמְעוֹן שְׁלֹמִיאֵל בֶּן-צוּרִישַׁדַּי: ז לְיְהוּדָה נַחֲשׁוֹן בֶּן-עֲמִינָדָב: ח לְיִשְׁשַׁכָּר נְתַנְאֵל בֶּן-צוּעָר: ט לְזְבוּלֹן אֱלִיאָב בֶּן-חֶלֶן: י לְבִנְיָמִן יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם אֱלִישַׁמָּע בֶּן-עֲמִיֵּהוּד לְמִנְשֵׁה גַמְלִיאֵל בֶּן-פְּדָה צוּר: יא לְבִנְיָמִן אֲבִידָן בֶּן-גִּדְעֹנִי: יב לְדָן אַחִיעֶזֶר בֶּן-עֲמִישַׁדַּי: יג לְאֶשֶׁר פְּגַעִיאֵל בֶּן-עֶכְרֹן: יד לְגַד אֶלְיָסָף בֶּן-דְּעוּאֵל: טו לְנִפְתָּלִי אַחִירַע בֶּן-עֵינָן: טז אֵלֶּה קְרִיאֵי [קְרוּאֵי] הָעֵדָה נְשִׂאֵי מִטּוֹת אַבּוֹתֵם רְאִשֵׁי אֶלְפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵם: *1:5 ‘These then are the names of the men who shall stand with you: of Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur; 1:6 of Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; 1:7 of Judah, Nahshon the son of Amminadab; 1:8 of Issachar, Nethanel the son of Zuar; 1:9 of Zebulun, Eliab the son of Helon; 1:10 of the sons of Joseph: of Ephraim, Elishama the son of Ammihud; of Manasseh, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; 1:11 of Benjamin, Abidan the son of Gideon; 1:12 of Dan, Ahiezer the son of*

Ammishaddai; 1:13 of Asher, Pagiel the son of Ochrán; 1:14 of Gad, Eliasaph the son of Deuel; 1:15 of Naphtali, Ahira the son of Enan. 1:16 'These are they who were called of the congregation, the leaders of their fathers' tribes; they were the heads of divisions of Israel.'

(NASB) Here the Lord calls certain men out by name to help Moshe in numbering the people according to the opening verses in the book of Bamidbar / Numbers. What this teaches us is how the Lord knows each of us by name and He has a plan for each and every one of us. These are important concepts as are related to being called according to God's plan (His Word) and obeying or disobeying the Word of the Lord. Compare the nations and their ways. One example may be taken from Israel's history in 1 and 2 Kings with Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Jeroboam was a member of the Tribe of Ephraim of Zereda. His mother was named Zeruah (צֶרֻחַ *"leprous"*) and was a widow. (*1 Kings 11:26*) He had at least two sons, Abijah and Nadab, who succeeded him on the throne. Jeroboam rebuilt and fortified Shechem as the capital of the northern kingdom, and fearing the pilgrimages to the temple in Jerusalem would weaken his kingdom, he built two golden calves, one in Bethel and the other in Dan, and caused the people to sin in worshiping these idols. After Jeroboam made this new form of worship, he also made priests of anyone who could bring their own sacrifices to be sanctified as priests. The Torah however explains the Lord God Almighty chose only one clan, the Levi to be priests. (Note also how we see a modern manifestation of the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat in the Catholic church in the replacement theology and making priests of anybody who is willing.) What this teaches us is the concept of replacement is very ancient and has occult origins that lead back to the sin of the golden calf. According to the Torah, the people were delivered from Egypt, the land of slavery, bondage, and sin, by their faith, brought through the Red sea, and to the mountain of Sinai. After the people had been redeemed and delivered, it was only after these things that God had given them His Torah (instructions) as a way of life for a chosen and holy people. The basic narrative of the deliverance and redemption of Israel lays out the Gospel Message, we enter into a relationship with God by faith, and after having been redeemed we are given the Torah as a way of life. The Torah is a way of life (a way of living) because the Lord God of Israel is walking and living

in our midst. The Torah was not given such that a man may earn his way to redemption, or get himself into a relationship with God. Just as we see here in the priesthood, the tribe of Levi was chosen, in fact, all of the first born were chosen, they did not earn their way into a state so that they *“could be chosen.”* This fits the same pattern we see in the Exodus deliverance and redemption of Israel. God has a plan for His people, and He also has a plan for you and me. The nations on the other hand prescribe a method to *“get”* into the priesthood, as we see in the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat in the replacement theology (the golden calves) and making priests of anyone who wanted to be a priest. This occult perspective of earning one’s way into the priesthood, is a very prevalent approach in world religions, so much so that it has made its way into the theological constructs of Christianity today, and continues to be preached from the pulpit as truth and is related to replacement theology, and the teaching that Yeshua changed the Law of God by doing away with the Torah being substituted with new commands. These deeply rooted concepts of replacement theology for example is illustrated in the typesetting of the bible as the *“OLD”* and *“NEW”* testaments. The point of the matter, in Yeshua the Messiah we have a renewed covenant upon which God will write His Torah upon our hearts. The covenant in Christ is not something that does away with *“the old”* which is so often taught today.

The verses we are reading this week are from *Bamidbar / Numbers 3:1-17*.

Bamidbar / Numbers 3:1-17

3:1 Now these are the records of the generations of Aaron and Moses at the time when the Lord spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. 3:2 These then are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 3:3 These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, whom he ordained to serve as priests. 3:4 But Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord when they offered strange fire before the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai; and they had no children. So Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests in the lifetime of their father Aaron. 3:5 Then the Lord spoke

to Moses, saying, 3:6 'Bring the tribe of Levi near and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. 3:7 'They shall perform the duties for him and for the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, to do the service of the tabernacle. 3:8 'They shall also keep all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, along with the duties of the sons of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle. 3:9 'You shall thus give the Levites to Aaron and to his sons; they are wholly given to him from among the sons of Israel. 3:10 'So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons that they may keep their priesthood, but the layman who comes near shall be put to death.' 3:11 Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 3:12 'Now, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of every firstborn, the first issue of the womb among the sons of Israel. So the Levites shall be Mine. 3:13 'For all the firstborn are Mine; on the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, from man to beast. They shall be Mine; I am the Lord.' 3:14 Then the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying, 3:15 'Number the sons of Levi by their fathers' households, by their families; every male from a month old and upward you shall number.' 3:16 So Moses numbered them according to the word of the Lord, just as he had been commanded. 3:17 These then are the sons of Levi by their names: Gershon and Kohath and Merari. (NASB)

א וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת אֶהֱרֹן וּמֹשֶׁה בְּיוֹם דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶת-
מֹשֶׁה בְּהַר סִינַי: ב וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי-אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן | נָדָב
וְאַבְיָהוּא אֲלֻעָזָר וְאִיתָמָר: ג אֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן-
נִים הַמְּשֻׁחִים אֲשֶׁר-מִלֵּא יָדָם לְכַהֵן: ד וַיִּמַּת נָדָב וְאַבְיָהוּא
לְפָנֵי יְהוָה בְּהִקְרָבָם אֲשֶׁר יָרָה לְפָנָי יְהוָה בְּמִדְבַר סִינַי
וּבְנִים לֹא-הָיוּ לָהֶם וַיִּכְהֵן אֲלֻעָזָר וְאִיתָמָר עַל-פְּנֵי אֶהֱרֹן
אַבְיָהוּם: פ ה וַיִּדְבַר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ו הַקָּרֵב

אַת-מִטָּה לְוִי וְהֶעֱמַדְתָּ אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי אֶהָרֶן הַפֶּהֶן וְשָׂרְתוּ אֹתוֹ:
 ז וְשָׂמְרוּ אֶת-מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ וְאֶת-מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ כָּל-הָעֵדָה לִפְנֵי
 אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לְעַבְדֹת אֶת-עֲבֹדַת הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ח וְשָׂמְרוּ אֶת-כָּל-
 כְּלֵי אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְאֶת-מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַבְדֹת אֶת-עֲבֹדַת
 הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ט וְנִתְּמָה אֶת-הַלְוִיִּם לְאֶהָרֶן וּלְבְנָיו נְתוּנִים נְתוּנִים
 הָמָּה לֹא מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: י וְאֶת-אֶהָרֶן וְאֶת-בְּנָיו תִּפְקֹד
 וְשָׂמְרוּ אֶת-כְּהֻנַּתְם וְהָזָר הַקָּרֵב יוֹמֵת: פ יֵא וַיִּדְבֹּר
 יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: יב וְאֲנִי הִנֵּה לְקַחְתִּי אֶת-הַלְוִיִּם
 מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תַּחַת כָּל-בְּכוֹר פֶּטֶר רֶחֶם מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְהָיוּ לִי הַלְוִיִּים: יג כִּי לִי כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּיוֹם הַכֹּתִי כָל-בְּכוֹר
 בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הַקְדַּשְׁתִּי לִי כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֲדָם עַד-
 בְּהֵמָּה לִי יִהְיוּ אֲנִי יְהוָה: פ [חמישי] יד וַיִּדְבֹּר יְהוָה
 אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַר סִינַי לֵאמֹר: טו פִּקֹּד אֶת-בְּנֵי לְוִי לְבֵית
 אֲבֹתָם לְמִשְׁפַּחְתָּם כָּל-זָכָר מִבֶּן-חָדָשׁ וּמַעֲלָה תִּפְקֹדֵם: טז
 וַיִּפְקֹד אֹתָם מֹשֶׁה עַל-פִּי יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה: יז וַיְהִי-אֵלֶּה
 בְּנֵי-לְוִי בְּשֵׁמֹתָם גְּרִשׁוֹן וְקַהַת וּמְרָרִי:

According to the Scriptures the biblical construct for seeking God is to repent and seek the Mercy of God for the forgiveness of sins. On the other hand, the premise of the world religions (i.e. the pagan or occult perspective) is having a relationship with God involves working one's way into the relationship that is coupled to a replacement for the truth that is taught in the Bible. This idea is so prevalent today and throughout history that it has made its way into the theological constructs of Christianity, and continues to be preached from the pulpit as truth and is related to replacement theology, and that teaching that Yeshua changed the Law of God. A basic review of the world's major religions illustrates this concept of a works based faith.

Islam

Islam is known from the Middle East, Africa and all over the world. For Islam, entrance into heaven is accessed by practicing and repeating the five pillars. The five pillars of Islam are: fasting, pilgrimage, giving alms, prayer (five times a day), and confessing that

Muhammad is the Prophet. By the continual practice of these things, a faithful practitioner may gain entrance into heaven. In Islam, one is not guaranteed entrance into heaven leaving the practitioner wondering. The only guaranteed way to gain entrance into paradise is through death by jihad (that one dies while fighting unbelievers or infidels).

Hinduism

In Hinduism, the idea of entrance to heaven, or the way to salvation, is by eliminating evil in your life, until one is pure enough to merge with Brahman. In Hinduism, God does not have an individual personality, it is a force. The concept of reincarnation is also involved, and so one continues to keep trying, life after life after life, to purify one's self before being able to merge with Brahman.

Confucianism

Confucianism, the way of life propagated by Confucius in the 6-5th century BCE and followed by the Chinese people for more than two millennia. Although transformed over time, it is still the substance of learning, the source of values, and the social code of the Chinese. Confucianism is a world-view, a social ethic, a political ideology, a scholarly tradition, and a way of life. Sometimes viewed as a philosophy and sometimes as a religion, Confucianism may be understood as an all-encompassing way of thinking and living that entails ancestor reverence and a profound human-centred religiousness. East Asians may profess themselves to be Shintoists, Daoists, Buddhists, Muslims, or Christians, but, by announcing their religious affiliations, seldom do they cease to be Confucians.

Shinto

The religion of Japan, believes that the country itself

fell from the heavens, and the Emperor is a god and the people are children of the gods. In the Shinto religion, Japanese supremacy and maintaining it, was heaven on earth. During the Second World War, suicide bombers would fly their planes into American ships believing when they were doing this, they were doing it for God. This was the result of believing the Emperor was a god.

Buddhism

Buddhism can be found in India, Vietnam, China, Thailand, etc. In Buddhism, the idea of salvation is the elimination of desire which leads to eternal bliss. In Buddhism, through meditation, through religious practice, through asceticism, the goal is to discipline the body to the point where the body does not have a desire for anything, i.e. no food, no comfort. Food would be only for keeping you alive. By eliminating all desire, one eliminates all pain and suffering and evil.

Taoism

Taoism also teaches one can have heaven on earth where the way to achieve this is to become balanced in your environment. (i.e. the Yin-Yang symbol)

Paganism

There are many forms of paganism such as voodoo or witchcraft, magic, nature worship, etc. Nature worship for example is the type practiced by Native Americans here in the United States and in other places, the idea of this form of worship involved the land, the air, and the trees, the sacred burial grounds, etc. The religious practices in paganism is man manipulates the spirits or the unseen forces, in order to create heaven for themselves here on earth. Another example, the idea of magic and the occult, is the practitioner has something physical that he/she manipulates or says words over making an incantation with a mixture or procedure, do-

ing something in the physical world that will somehow manipulate the spirits in the spirit world, to act in favor or against someone else. Voodoo, functions in this way with the voodoo doll.

What we find here in this short survey is the idea of replacement (changing the truth taught in the Scriptures) and then the practice of these new constructs as a means to attain something, entrance into heaven, or heaven on earth, or the manipulation of spiritual forces, etc. The basic tenant of the religious, occult, or pagan practice is of a man reformulating his understanding of who God is and then earning his way by his actions into heaven (i.e. Islam and the five pillars and Jihad). When we consider the modern theologies that we are being taught today in the Church, it is taught in Seminary and at the pulpit that man earned his salvation in the OT by keeping the Law of God, and this was changed in the NT by the Lord bringing His Messiah. This become known as “LAW vs. GRACE” and is the foundation stone for the theology of Dispensationalism. This is then coupled to the pagan idea that Yeshua did away with the command. The question you may have is “*Why is this a pagan concept?*” This may be understood from the Torah command the Lord God Almighty saying that we are not to serve him the way the nations serve their gods. (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:4 and 12:31*)

Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:4

ד לא-תַעֲשׂוּן כִּן לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

New International Version

You must not worship the LORD your God in their way.

New Living Translation

“Do not worship the LORD your God in the way these pagan peoples worship their gods.

English Standard Version

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

New American Standard Bible

“You shall not act like this toward the LORD your God.

King James Bible

Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:31

לא לא-תעשה כן ליהוה אלהיך כי כל-תועבת יהוה אשר
שנא עשו לאלהיהם כי גם את-בניהם ואת-בנותיהם ישרפו
באש לאלהיהם:

New International Version

You must not worship the LORD your God in their way, because in worshipping their gods, they do all kinds of detestable things the LORD hates. They even burn their sons and daughters in the fire as sacrifices to their gods.

New Living Translation

You must not worship the LORD your God the way the other nations worship their gods, for they perform for their gods every detestable act that the LORD hates. They even burn their sons and daughters as sacrifices to their gods.

English Standard Version

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way, for every abominable thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods, for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.

New American Standard Bible

“You shall not behave thus toward the LORD your God, for every abominable act which the LORD hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

King James Bible

Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

The NIV, NLT, and ESV translations connect what one does (תַּעֲשֶׂהוּ, תַּעֲשֶׂהוּ) with worship unto the Lord (translating לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂהוּ as “*you shall not worship*”). Do you see how this is also a very rabbinic way of thinking when the Rabbis emphasize the importance of Torah study and the application of God’s Word? The NASB and KJV are closest to the Hebrew text saying “*do not do/act thus/like-this unto/toward the Lord your God.*” (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:4*) And how do the nations serve their gods? A very basic survey of the religious practice of the nations demonstrate replacement and entrance into heaven by the way of their works. Christian tradition also teaches that Judaism (the OT practice of faith and faithfulness to God in the Temple services) teaches a works based faith, each man had keep the commands in order to be saved. The coupling of this idea of works based salvation has led to the theology that the Lord God has now changed this by bringing His son Yeshua the Messiah, we have entered into the age of grace (a dispensationalist approach). The significant error of this interpretation is in the belief that God established a way of worship and service by works just as the nations have established their ways. This is a serious problem in light of the Scriptures that state we are not to do as the nations do, we are not to serve or worship the Lord the way the nations serve their gods (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:4 and 12:31*). Note, the procedures listed in the Torah in the Temple service are drastically different from the religious practices and services of the nations, however, this concept of the Lord requiring works for salvation is of a pagan influence. So the idea that Yeshua has done away with God’s commands is rooted in a worldly perspective, and of pagan origin.

A few brief examples from the NT may help to understand why this is so.

1. *The hearers of the Torah (Law) are not justified before*

*the Lord, but the doers of the Law will be justified (**Romans 2:23**).*

2. *The promises of God come out of the Law, which Paul told the Ephesians they must obey, that things would go well with them and they might live long on earth. (**Ephesians 6:2-3, Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:16**)*
3. *The writer of the Book of Hebrews confirms that the New covenant is the same covenant of God's Law that he promised to renew by writing it on our hearts and minds. (**Hebrews 10:16**)*
4. *James writes that the person who commits sin is transgressing the Law (**James 2:11, 2:8-26**)*
5. *By keeping the Lord's commandments, one can know that he knows God (**1 John 2:3-4**).*
6. *Prayers are answered when the Lord's commands are kept and people do what is pleasing in his sight. (**1 John 3:22**)*
7. *Keeping the commandments, causes God to dwell in us and gives assurance through His Spirit (**1 John 3:24**).*
8. *Keeping God's commandments proves our love for God and fellow believers is real (**1 John 5:2-3**).*
9. *The definition of biblical love is to walk after God's commandments (**2 John 6**).*
10. *Only those who keep the Lord's commandments will have the right to the Tree of life (**Revelation 22:14**).*
11. *Referring to the Torah, the only Law he could have been referring to, James wrote, "whosoever looks into the perfect Law of liberty, and continues therein, being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, shall be blessed in his deeds" (**James 1:25**).*
12. *The man who says he knows the Lord but does not*

keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him (1 John 2:4).

Based upon this short survey of the NT Scriptures, the Torah of God is an integral part of the very fabric of NT thought. The apostles never taught that the Torah was superfluous or that grace was a license to sin. In addition to this, according to *John 10* we read Yeshua saying many things, and the people recognized what he was claiming about himself and his opponents picked up stones to stone him. Yeshua said in *John 10:32* “... *I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?*” He then went on to quote from the Psalms, and in *John 10:35* he said “*If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came--and Scripture cannot be set aside.*” (NIV) Notice how Yeshua says “*Scripture cannot be set aside*” however, this is the very thing that is taking place in the theologies that teach replacement and the Law of God is done away with. Is this not a serious error in the interpretation of Scripture? Therefore, the teaching that the Messiah has done away with the Law of God is of pagan origins, and the idea of ascribing a works based salvation to God’s Torah is also of pagan origins. Note how in the world religions, the burden is on the human being to do something to achieve something or comply with someone or something, in order to earn or find heaven, nirvana, salvation, happiness, Brahman, etc. Whatever it’s called, i.e. the Islamic paradise, one has to do something in order to enter heaven. According to Biblical truth, the people of Israel were redeemed and delivered, they had a relationship with God and the Lord God gave them His Torah as a way of life. The commands are therefore a fundamental aspect of faithfulness unto God. Because of these things, we are told in the Scriptures that the Babylonian captivity was the result of Israel’s failure to keep the Torah. Because of this the Lord God sent Babylon to carry them away. This is related to faith and faithfulness. Can we claim to have faith but remain unfaithful to God and His Word? This is why the study of the Torah was one of the highest priorities and the highest form of worship to God in the first century. Each synagogue had beside it or as a part of it a Bet Midrash (a house of study) which was often more highly esteemed than the synagogue itself. We see this intensive commitment to studying God’s Word in Paul’s admoni-

tion to Timothy saying, *“Study to show thyself approved by God”* (2 Timothy 2:15). According to the Scriptures the biblical construct for seeking God is to repent and seek the Mercy of God for the forgiveness of sins. The Lord God Almighty calls our hearts to repentance and the need for forgiveness of sin. This is the gospel message, we believe in the Lord God and His Messiah by faith, we enter into a relationship with God, and He gives us His word to live by as a people who are holy and separate unto Him. He sends His Spirit to dwell in our hearts, to help us to overcome the world, and to overcome sin in our lives such that we can bring glory to His Name! This is a Torah based perspective and this is why the Torah and the Gospel Message go hand in hand!