

פרשת כי תצא / Parashat Ki Tetzei

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Your ways versus G-d's ways?

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19
הפטרה: Isaiah 54:1-54:10
הברית: Matthew 5:27-30 1 Corinthians 5:1-5
החדשה

10 In an attempt to set the stage for this week's parsha, Parashat Ki Tetzei, I chose
the title "Your ways versus G-d's ways?" in order to get us to begin thinking
about where we are and what we are doing today, in our faith in Yeshua the
Messiah, in our daily walk as believers, and in our ministry to others. Our faith in
the Most High and our walk as believers, and our ministry are closely interrelated.
15 If we claim to have faith in the creator G-d (the Most High G-d of Yisrael,
HaShem) then certainly we believe in the authority of the Word of G-d in our
lives including its application to our lives. But have you ever wondered what
really applies to your life from the bible? Depending upon who you talk to there
appears to be a conflict from what G-d's Word says versus how we actually live.

20 The conflict deals with how much of the Word of G-d do we apply to our lives
today? As Messianic believers we are pulled from two sides, Christianity (the
Church), and Modern Judaism. The Church claims Messianic believers are
legalistic and placing themselves under the bondage of the Law, the Church says
all we need is Yeshua and nothing else. The rabbinical teaching from Modern
25 Judaism states:

30 *"Take with you words and return to the Lord, say to him, All together
forgive guilt, and accept good, and let us pay (in place of) bullocks (the
utterance) of our lips. We will never again call the work of our hands our
gods." Talmud Bavli, Yoma 86a-b*

Basically the concept was developed in Judaism to teach the principle that
repentance involves the resolve not to repeat offenses and through Gemilut
Hasidim (deeds of loving kindness) one does not need the blood atonement of
35 bulls (take for example the prayer concerning the "bulls of our lips" located in the
Shacharis/Morning Service in the Korbanot section of any Siddur).

So, on the one side we are told "no Torah" and on the other side we are told
"only Torah." As messianic believers it is quite possible to become confused on
these issues. Our goal is to seek the truth found in the scriptures as taught by
40 Yeshua and his disciples. I believe we are saved in the blood of Yeshua the
Messiah; there is absolutely no other way for us to be saved outside of our faith in
Yeshua and the atonement he made on our behalf. Christians and Messianic alike
agree on this fundamental truth in the Bible. What I would like to look at in this

45 week's parsha is where the Messianic Faith disagrees with the Christian Faith. Specifically on the topic of Torah observance and how this fits into the life of a person who has placed their life, faith, and trust in G-d's Messiah Yeshua. So, let's begin.

The Parsha Study

50 Reading through this week's parsha, Parashat Ki Tetzei, we find an enlarged final—nun, so like always we should have a closer look at these verses. Review the following verses from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 22:6-7*:

6 ם כִּי יִקְרָא בֶן־צִפּוֹר לְפָנָיִךָ בְּדַרְךְּ בְּכַלְעֵץ אִוּוּ עַל־
 הָאָרֶץ אֲפֹרָחִים אִוּוּ בִּיצִים וְהָאֵם רֹבֶצֶת עַל־הָאֲפֹרָחִים
 7 אִוּוּ עַל־הַבִּיצִים לֹא־תִקַּח הָאֵם עִלְיָהֶן: שְׁלַח תְּשַׁלַּח
 אֶת־הָאֵם וְאֶת־הַבָּנִים תִּקְדָּלְךָ לְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ וְהָאֲרָכָתָּ
 8 יָמִים: כִּי תִבְנֶה בַּיִת חָדָשׁ וְעָשִׂיתָ

 כב. 2 v. כן בירוחו מנוגן. 3 v. ס'א בן וכן ח'ש, ת'ע, ת'ס ות'ר. 3 v. בירוחו וכן.
 6 v. 7 רבתי. 10 v. נ'א, ב'נ בשורר בלא געיא.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 22:6-7
 22:6 'If you happen to come upon a bird's nest along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young; 22:7 you shall certainly let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself, in order that it may be well with you and that you may prolong your days. (NASB)

60 It is interesting here in the Torah there is a promise of reward for fulfilling the mitzvah (command) of "shiluach ha'ken" one will receive both "l'maan yitan lach" (So that you will fair well) and "v'haarachta yamim" (and have long days/life). I don't know about you but first of all these verses appear quite confusing. What do you think is the meaning or purpose of these verses? I think it might be helpful to ask if we have ever seen this type of blessing before in the Torah. Are there any other places in the Torah were this type of promise is mentioned? The answer is yes, in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:16*:

רַבְתִּי = great, large; written large

Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:6
 5:16 'Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you. (NASB)

16 לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: כִּבְדֹּד אֶת־
 אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְמַעַן וַיֵּאָרִיכוּ
 יָמֶיךָ וְלִמַּעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 17 נָתַן לָךְ: לֹא תִרְצָח: וְלֹא

70 So here we find to honor your father and mother and its connection to the verse in this week's parsha to not kill the mother sitting / protecting her eggs. Now if we look at the context of the verses, the verses prior to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 22:6-7*, we find a command for men not to wear women's clothing. The verses after *Devarim / Deuteronomy 22:6-7* is a command to build a fence around the roof of your home so someone does not fall, die, and cause blood to come upon your house. These mitzvot appear to be in a sort of random order. So the context

doesn't appear to help us much in our understanding of these verses. I believe the key to understanding these verses is found in the promise or blessing HaShem gives to those who keep this Mitzvah (command).

80 Various explanations have been given by the Chazal (חז"ל) in the Talmud over the reasoning behind the random order of the mitzvot (commandments) and why HaShem had Moshe write them down as he did. This week I feel it is more instructive however to look at another portion of scripture from *Yeshayahu / Isahai 55:6-9* rather than the rabbinic reasoning. While reading through this
85 portion of scripture from Isaiah think about the command to honor your father and mother. Ask yourself what is G-d trying to tell us here? How does honoring your father and mother cause your life to go well and even extend your life as it says "you will have long life?"

5 נִתְּתִיו נִגְיָד וּמְצִיגָה לְאֲמִים: הֲנִי גֹי לְאֶתְדַע תִּקְרָא וְגֹי
לְאֶתְדַעוֹד אֱלֹהִי יִרְצֵנִי לְמַעַן יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהִי וְלִקְרוֹשׁ
6 יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פִאֲרָד: דְּרָשׁוּ
7 יְהוָה בְּהִמְצָאוֹ קִרְאֵהוּ בְּהִוְתֵּנוּ קְרוֹב: יַעֲזֹב רָשָׁע
דְּרָכָו וְאִישׁ אֶן מַחְשְׁבֹתָיו וַיָּשָׁב אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּרְחַמְהוּ
8 וְאֶל־אֱלֹהֵינוּ כִּי־יִרְבֶּה לְסִלּוֹחַ: כִּי לֹא מַחְשְׁבוֹתַי
9 מַחְשְׁבוֹתֵיכֶם וְלֹא דְרָכֵיכֶם דְּרָכֵי נְאֻם יְהוָה: כִּי־גִבְהוּ
שָׁמַיִם מֵאָרֶץ כֵּן גִּבְהוּ דְרָכֵי מִדְּרָכֵיכֶם וּמַחְשְׁבֹתַי
10 מִמַּחְשְׁבוֹתֵיכֶם: כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר יִרְדֵּ הַגֶּשֶׁם וְהַשֶּׁלֶג מִן

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In *Yeshayahu / Isaiah 55:6-9* we are told the wicked must forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return to the Lord. HaShem clarifies the statement for a man to turn from his ways and from his thoughts
95 because His ways are far beyond our ways. This is illustrated with a picture that the heavens are higher than the earth so are the Lord's ways above ours. So you may be asking how this fits into these verses on honoring our father and mother in this week's parsha. Let me explain with an example.

100 In *Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:16 and 22:6-7* we find HaShem commanding us to honor our parents and even in the animal kingdom the mother which protects its young. If a child desires to honor his/her parent one does so by doing what they say. If you want to make your parents happy you do what they tell you to do, take out the trash, fold the laundry, clean up your room, and cutting the grass are all examples of what would make a parent happy. In the same way if we want to
105 keep the Lord our G-d happy we do what he tells us to do. In *Yeshayahu / Isaiah* G-d is telling us to turn from our ways and our thoughts. The turning from our ways is drawn in parallel with wickedness which suggests that our ways are wicked before the Lord. So obviously we must turn from our ways and I don't

Yeshayahu / Isaiah 55:6-9

Isa55:6 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. 55:9 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. (NASB)

110 believe anyone will disagree here on this point. The question is however if we are
to turn from our ways and our thoughts how do we do this? The scriptures say we
are to walk in the ways of the Lord. The question then is what are G-d's ways
and how do we walk in the ways of the Lord? How does a man or woman walk
righteously before the Lord?

115 To me it is pretty clear cut for us that we need to live according to G-d's ways
and by doing so He will pour out His blessings on us to accomplish His goals and
establish His kingdom. But if we give our heart to some other object (materials
things, money, etc) another authority created by God or fashioned by man, we
will face the dire consequences. The greatest punishment is an absence of a
120 personal, loving relationship with Him. I believe this message has powerful and
practical implications for us today. The ways of the Lord are right. Our success
or failure in following his ways determines the end results of our lives. It is that
simple, rebellion brings destruction and downfall. Those who stray from the
Word of G-d are doomed. But obedience brings the flourishing promises of G-d
125 in our lives and the benefits are passed to the people around us (i.e. our ministry
to others).

What do you mean by obedience?

130 Obedience is found in our forsaking our ways and our thoughts and following
in HaShem's ways and thoughts. How do we find this? We find it in the Torah.

The goal of the Torah is to point to the Messiah and if one seeks to understand
the righteousness of the Messiah Yeshua he will do so in G-d's revealed Word in
the Torah. This is what is meant when the apostle Shaul (Paul) said what he did
135 in *Romans 10:4*.

Romans 10:4

*10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who
believes. (NASB)*

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Romans 10:4

*10:4 For the goal at which the Torah aims is the Messiah, who offers
righteousness to everyone who trusts. (CJB)*

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Romans 10:4

*10:4 τέλος γαρ νομου χριστος εις δικαιοσυνην παντι τω
πιστευοντι (GREEK)*

150 Here it says that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who
believes, it does not mean the Torah has ended, it means the Torah's aim is the
Messiah. Modern scholarship has found a problem with the translation of this
verse in scripture. The error made by most English translations and
commentators for that matter is very anti-Semitic even when none is intended.
155 The problem deals with the rendering of the Greek word "telos" as "end" in the
sense of "termination." The New American Standard Bible is very ambiguous

when it reads “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” because it leaves the reader to the decision whether “end” means “termination” or “purpose.” The Messiah has not brought the Law to an end. The point being that the Torah is eternal and when properly understood is the very teaching which Yeshua upholds.

2 Corinthians 5:17

5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (NASB)

Romans 12:1-2

12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (NASB)

Shaul (Paul) talks about the Torah, our lives, and sin. Shaul is saying in Yeshua our relationship to sin has changed. If our relationship to sin has changed then our relationship to the Torah has also changed. The question is how? The Torah certainly has not passed away because this would cause some serious problems. First, the problem of the Torah passing away; if the Torah has passed away, Yeshua’s blood would no longer atone for our sins. It is because of the covenant of the Torah that our sins are atoned for in Yeshua’s blood suggesting the Torah is presently playing a role in our continued redemption in Yeshua’s blood. Second, if the Torah has passed away, the very words of Yeshua would be a lie according to *Matthew 5:17-18*:

Matthew 5:17-18

5:17 ‘Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 5:18 ‘For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. (NASB)

So Yeshua did not come to abolish the Torah (also see *Luke 21:33, Matthew 24:35*). Shaul’s point is the real enemy is sin but the church today teaches the Torah is the real enemy. This is a very big problem because for many the power of tradition is overwhelming. Contrary to what the church teaches observing the Torah is not placing ourselves back into bondage to the Law and to sin. When Yeshua shed his blood for us our relationship to sin changed as well as our relationship to the Torah in the sense now we can in joy live out HaShem’s way for righteous living. Not under a heavy yoke of trying to keep ourselves in the covenant relationship that is established in the Torah (i.e. earning our salvation). I believe this point is explained in Ephesians 2:14-16 when Shaul said that Yeshua abolished the enmity of the flesh and the Torah.

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Ephesians 2:14-16

2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 2:15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 2:16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. (NASB)

Basically, what Shaul (Paul) is saying here is that a person who has trusted G-d as is required in the Torah will understand and respond to the Gospel by also trusting in G-d's Messiah Yeshua. It is in this way that one will be deemed righteous in the sight of G-d. Only by believing in Yeshua will he be able to obey the torah and thus Yeshua has abolished the enmity between the flesh and the Torah. By disbelieving in Yeshua he will be disbelieving in the Torah. This is because the goal at which the Torah aims is the Messiah who offers the Torah's righteousness, which is G-d's righteousness to everyone who believes.

Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever