

YOVEL

1st edition / May 2017

"Then have the trumpet sound everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan."
(Lev. 25:9-10)

In Hebrew the fiftieth year is called Yovel, a celebration year, jubilee. It is the year of the blowing of the ram's horn. Thus Yovel got its name from the shofar announcing the beginning of the year. The sound of the Yovel declares the beginning of a new era, the era of God's favour towards Israel. In Hebrew the word yovel can be read in two ways. Either "yovel", which means a ram or a ram's

horn like a shofar, or in passive voice "yuval", is led or was led, like in Isaiah 53: "he was led like a lamb to the slaughter... for the transgression of my people he was punished."
Like a lamb which has a desire to follow its shepherd humbly, to be led, "yuval".

The three names of the shofar are like a road signs on our salvation path: Keren, which is the name including the personal calling, rose up in smoke with the sacrificed ram instead of Isaac (Gen. 22:13). On Mount Sinai the Israelites heard the sound of that horn, Shofar, for the first time when it called the people to make the change, a turn a round, teshuva. The nation learned the sound of the shofar when The Lord himself blew the horn (Ex. 19:16). From that point on the Israelites

were commanded to blow themselves on the shofar (Lev. 25:9), until The Sovereign Lord himself blows it, this time the shofar called Yovel (Zech. 9:14).

Then He will announce freedom, liberation, a jubilee to all nations, to all of those who will hear His voice.

Yeshua the Messiah, Jesus Christ, started his ministry in the synagogue declaring with the words of Isaiah 61:1-2 proclaiming good news to the poor, freedom for the captives, release from darkness for the prisoners and proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor.

Proclaiming the jubilee, which is The Messiah himself.

In Him is the heritage restored, the one we lost in the garden of Eden. In Him is the essence of Yovel. (<http://torah-art.net>)

Markus Nurmesniemi



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Editorial

May 2017: "Small Beginnings"

Shalom chaverim!

You are now holding in your hands the fruit of the small beginnings.

This journal is a result of an idea slowly molding in the heart in time. It has retreated in the back in the tides of everyday life every now and then, but never it was labeled as "cancelled".

The final impulse to the launch was three different visions from a three different persons. All of the visions pointed to the same goal, shedding light to the different sides of the whole picture. Now the result of it is at your hands. You can find the explanation of the name of this journal from the front page, while the core idea and the purpose of this journal is well explained in Keijo Lindeman's article "The Restoration of All Things" (Page 4).

British dr. Clifford Denton's and an American Paul Sumner's enlightening articles complete this first edition's picture with elegance. Even I as a writer has put some effort to this edition with the subject of "Yeshua and Torah". I think it's fair to say that with this roster it is confident to start the journey. "Yovel" will present more writers in the future as we will go along. When God is connecting the dots there is very little room for a random chance. So, when I was starting to build this journal connections were made through various periods and people. Eventually I got in contact with the people who has the experience of working with this kind of publication.

Dr Clifford Denton started a journal called "Tishrei" in 1992, and it also deals the topics included in "Yovel". Paul Sumner published in 1986-1995 paper called "Yashar", also the topics related.

Now both of their journals have been taken to Internet as an archives to be read, and both of them has web sites actively going on. As what comes to Keijo Lindeman, he is without a doubt Finland's "patriarch" in restoration themes concerning Biblical matters. He also contributed to publication work 36-37 years ago. He was involved in publishing Hengen Yhteys (The Connection of The Spirit) -journal at that time, which was published by Finnish

Joint Christian Bible School. We'll also look into prophetic perspectives concerning the end times through Keijo's insights.

As you can now read, "Yovel" is also published in English. For starters it will be distributed at least in some parts of Brazil, India and Malawi through the contacts out there. Also England and USA are viewed on this. Distribution is handled via e-mail.

As a chief editor of "Yovel" I emphasise that the journal won't quarrel and argue about any doctrines and theologies. The journal wants to help to advance the return of the whole Bride of The Messiah back to its apostolical and first century unity, connection and communion, agape-love and to the obedience of the Word of God. Yovel seeks to enlighten the return to our Hebrew roots of our precious faith as clear as possible to the delight and benefit of us all, scoping the whole message of The Bible.

Eyes must remain at all times in our Messiah Yeshua. Knowledge is important, but it must not replace the knowing of our Messiah in The Holy Spirit. Knowledge without love bulges us, and arrogance must not replace love (compare Romans 11).

Your neighbour is your neighbour, whether he or she is a formal Christian, a Church believer, a Catholic, an Orthodox Jew, a Jehova's witness, a Messianic, an Atheist, a drug addict, an alcoholic or a convict.

Whatever we do in our lives we must advance the message of The Kingdom of God, bound with love. We learn more all the time, first of all that we are not ready at all, not by a long shot.

The return to our roots of our faith is also the return to home. It is the return of the prodigal son to his father, who endorses the son with open arms.

The return is a process of learning, understanding, reconnecting to the family and its unity, and the acknowledgment of it all. That is also the case concerning the journal "Yovel".

This journal is also born in homage for late Anna Hänninen (19.9.1926 – 11.3.2017), honouring her life's work in The Messiah. Her long lasting and tireless praying and interces-



sion for the restoration of Israel, for the unity of The Bride of The Messiah, and for the little children in distress made a legacy, which "Yovel" in part wants to take on.

Her love for Israel and for the roots of our faith build bridges to the Israel-connection in ways, that are still constantly bearing fruit. This journal is a result of many lonely hours of resilient work. It has no budget of any kind to back it up, only the steps of faith. So if anyone feels in his or her heart to back this work up with intercession and prayer, I'd be more than grateful about it.

I now leave this journal to the hands of our Lord, Yeshua being the ultimate chief editor. Let us prepare the way for the Lord, and let's make straight paths for him!

Markus Nurmesniemi
editor in chief

(Markus has previously worked as a journalist for several years.)

Presenting

Keijo Lindeman



Keijo Lindeman

My journey to the Israeli roots of faith

"Therefore, repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be erased; so that times of refreshing may come from the Lord's presence; and he may send the Messiah appointed in advance for you, that is Yeshua. He has to remain in heaven until the time comes for restoring everything, as God said long ago, when he spoke through his holy prophets" (Acts 3:19-21, D.Stern, Complete Jewish Bible).

The apostle Peter's prophetic declaration in Jerusalem at Shavuot (Pentecost), nearly 2000 years ago, speaks about God's plan to restore all things into heavenly order according to His word and will for the return of the Messiah.

Israel, Jerusalem, the shabbat, the feasts of the Lord, the earth and also the church of God will be restored.

The restoration of the church means returning to the Israeli roots of Christian faith. It does not mean returning under the Old Covenant, that is the Torah (Torah=teaching, instruction, doctrine, law), or under the slavery of Rabbinistic

Judaism as some misinformed people think. Biblical restoration of the church is based on grace and freedom of the New Covenant and means thus returning to the truth of the whole Bible and the teaching and practice of the apostolic early church, of which we can read from the Acts and the Epistles.

Generally speaking Christianity as a whole has in many ways diverged from the example of the New Testament and broken away from the Israeli roots of faith because of replacement theology and antisemitism propagated mostly by Rome.

The return to the scriptural teaching, example, and practice, back to the Israeli roots of our faith, may be long and painful for some, even most people, but it is a homecoming every true church of God and every believer must carry through so that the church can be ready for the return of Yeshua the Messiah.

This journey of restoration has been rather long and multiphase for me, too, nor has it ended yet. It started already when I was a child in my native town of Heinävesi where the first seeds of God's word were sown into my heart at my aunt Fanny's Sunday

school and summer gatherings of the congregation, but also in the primary school, which still in those days had morning prayers and teaching of God's word. After I moved to Kuopio to live with some relatives I lived the life of a normal young man without personal faith, but I was reminded of Christian living by my believing relatives who were members of a Pentecostal church.

God then started to stir up my conscience in many different ways, e.g. through dreams, which made me open my Bible and read religious literature, especially literature dealing with Israel and biblical prophecy. This call of God led me to Yeshua and I became a believer. About that time I met my future wife, and we were baptized together in the church of Elim.

Since the time I was a young believer I testified about my faith and even preached in the meetings. In the early seventies, while studying in Vaasa, where Niilo Yli-Vainio was pastoring the local Pentecostal church, I was active in Tea-and-Word outreach and youth groups. There was revival at that time among young people and many of them found Yeshua and work even today in the service of the gospel.

I understood early that my call was to teach the word, and after having finished my studies of electrical engineer I travelled a lot speaking in Pentecostal and other churches and places. I worked a while in the All Christians' Bible school of Finland, which operated only a couple of years, and from the turn of 78/79 in the journal called Unity of Spirit they published.

All the time unity of believers, Israel and biblical prophecies were close to my heart.

I left my work as electrical engineer after a couple of years and started to serve the gospel as a

full time minister for more than ten years, mainly teaching the word and writing books. The last twenty years before retiring I worked as a teacher of electronics in vocational education. To meet the requirements I qualified both as a teacher and as an automation engineer.

Now that I am retired I can dedicate all my time to this Messianic ministry - supporting Israel, prophetic word, restoration and return to the Israeli roots of our faith according to the example of the early church - which God has laid upon my heart right from the start.

We had the joy to support the Bible distribution work of Kaarlo Syväntö in the late 70s and the 80s, and my wife and I have his blessing to serve in Israel ministry.

With late Councillor Alvi Meritaranta and Vicar Jalmari Hopeasalmi we founded in 1979 an organization called Israel-Apu Ry to support Israel ministry, restoration and return to the Israeli roots of faith.

The issue of restoration and our Messianic agenda caused friction between us and the Pentecostal church, and my wife and I left this church where at that time was little or no understanding of the return to the faith of the apostolic early church.

But I am grateful to the Pentecostal church for all the experience I got, and we still have many friends there and I have been asked to teach in Pentecostal churches, too.

Nowadays people in all churches have started to understand what restoration is all about although one still meets opposing voices, too.

My wife Salme has been a strong supporter of this ministry from the very beginning, for which I am infinitely grateful to the Holy One of Israel. From the 70s onwards

we travelled around Israel and took dozens of tourist groups to the Holy Land. During those years we made friends with many Israelis. Israel ministry and living in Israel in late 80s have deepened the significance of restoration and return to the Israeli roots.

We studied Hebrew in the Ulpan (language school), and being able to read the Holy Scriptures in their original language has given us deeper insight of God's word. While living in Israel we learnt to know Joseph Shulam and the work of the Messianic Organizati-

on Netivyah. Through them a close connection has been born with Messianic believers in Israel. We have been able to give Netivyah humanitarian help through Israel-Apu Ry during these years. We have organized Israel seminars in Finland, and partly in Sweden, already for 30 years.

Joseph Shulam and other Messianic believers e.g. from Brazil have been our guest speakers. Through Mirjam and Boas Adolph we have had the opportunity to go to Ukraine.

I have given dozens of Bible seminars in Ukrainian Messianic

communities, always with Mirjam interpreting in Russian.

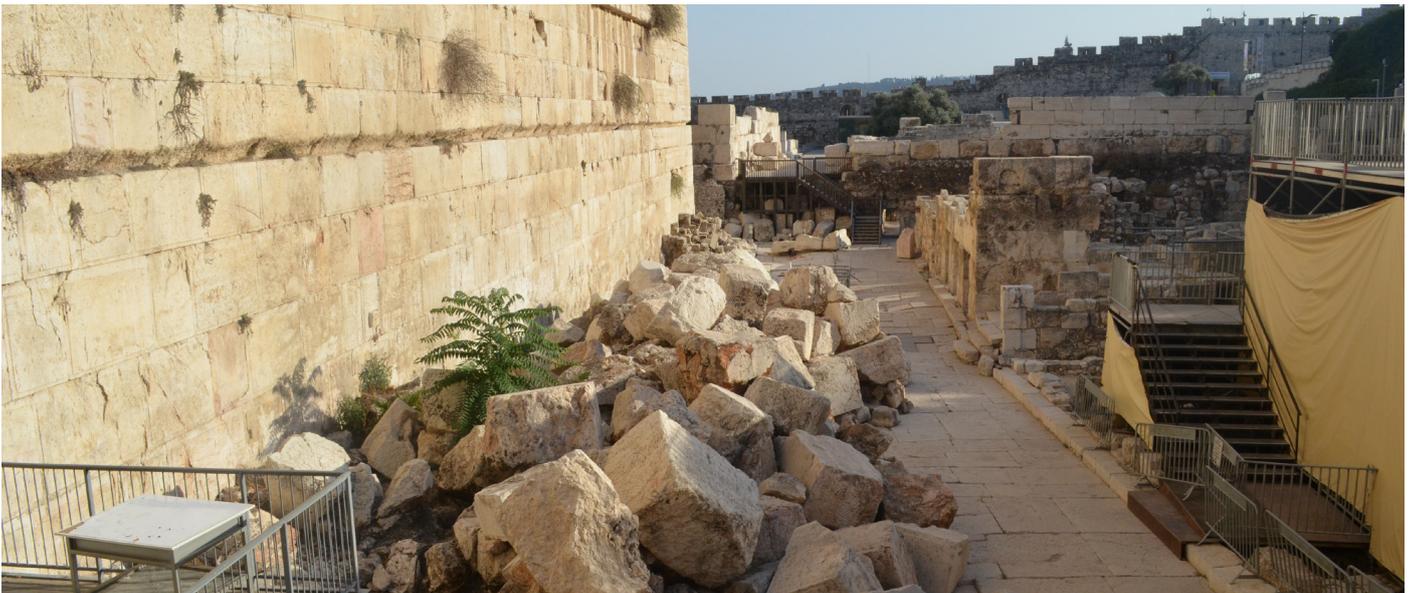
A Messianic bridge of brotherhood in faith has been built to Israel, Brazil, Ukraine, and Sweden, too, and the focus is on restoration and return to the Israeli roots of our faith according to the example of the apostolic early church.

This work goes on in collaboration with many Messianic friends in faith through Bible study groups, meetings, Israel seminars, recordings, e-mails, homepages, wri-

tings and books.

Our goal is to restore and prepare the church for the return of the Messiah and advance the grafting of other nations into the true Olive tree of Israel together with the Israeli Messianic believers, as the apostle Paul writes in Romans chapter 11. Messianic work and restoration advances in Finland and all over the world and the Holy One of Israel will accomplish His work according to the promises of His word.

The Restoration of All Things



Written by:
Keijo Lindeman

In this article we shall not discuss the basics of Christian life, such as coming to faith, being born again, baptism, seal and fullness of the Holy Spirit etc. We shall focus on restoration.

We shall call our Saviour with His original Hebrew name Yeshua, which means Saviour, Redeemer. Hebrew names usually have a meaning that describes the mission of the person. The Messiah's name, Yeshua, describes His mis-

sion as Saviour and Redeemer from sins (Matt. 1:21).

Yeshua was and is a Jew, the King of the Jews, and it is appropriate to use of Him His original Hebrew name Yeshua (Luke 1:32,33, Heb 7:14, Rev 5:5; 22:16).

But of course God hears us even if we use a name of our native language instead of Yeshua. Let us now consider restoration, of which the Bible speaks rather much.

Tikun Olam - putting the world right

In Hebrew thinking there is a concept called Tikun Olam = mending the world/putting the world right. Which means that the world is not in order. It is a fallen and corrupt world because of sin and needs mending, putting right i.e. restoration into the good order according to God's will.

This concept of Tikun Olam, known by all the Rabbies, appears in Mishna, e.g. The Bible speaks about the corruption and the mending, the restoration of the world.

The apostle Paul writes in Romans, chapter 8:

"And if we are children, then we are also heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Messiah – provided we are suffering with him in order also to be glorified with him. I don't think the suffering we are going through now are even worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed to us in the future. The creation waits eagerly for the sons of God to be revealed; for the creation was made subject to frustration – not willingly, but because of the

one who subjected it. But it was given reliable hope that it too would be set free from its bondage to decay and would enjoy the freedom accompanying the glory that God's children will have. We know that until now, the whole creation has been groaning as with the pains of childbirth; and not only it, but ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we continue waiting eagerly to be made sons, that is, to have our whole bodies redeemed and set free." (Rom. 8:17-23).

The apostle Paul speaks how the creation groans in the slavery of corruption and waits for the deliverance.

The believers also groan in their hearts waiting for the deliverance, the redemption of the body in the resurrection.

This will happen when the Messiah returns, when the believers are given a new glorified resurrection body and the sufferings of this earthly life are forgotten (Phil 3:20,21; 1 John 3:1,2).

The creation, too, will be set free from the slavery of corruption caused by sin, to the glorified freedom of God's children, to the condition of the Garden of Eden.

Putting everything in their right place – Tikun Olam – mending the world – relates thus in Paul's text to the time of the coming of the Messiah and the resurrection of the believers. The apostle Peter also speaks about putting everything in their place i.e. restoration.

Restoration and Return of the Messiah

"Therefore, repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be erased; so that times of refreshing may come from the Lord's presence; and he may send the Messiah appointed in advance for you, that is, Yeshua. He has to remain [present tense as in the Greek NT] in heaven until the time comes for restoring everything, as God said long ago, when he spoke through the holy prophets." (Acts 3:19-21)

The Finnish Raamattu kansalle version uses past tense 'heaven was to keep him' instead of the Greek and English 'he has to remain'.

In the Hebrew NT 'restoring eve-

rything' or 'putting all in place' reads as follows: ad jemei shuv kol hadvarim letikunam.

Its literal translation would be: until the days when all things are put back into their mending.

The Greek NT uses the term 'apokatastis' = restoration.

The word is used in Acts 1:6 and it relates to the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel.

We can thus say that restoration means mending, putting right or putting back into the original all things, the whole world, back into the good condition willed by God.

This means that the Messiah returned back to the heavens after His finished work at the cross, and now the heavens are holding back Yeshua the Messiah until all things in the world are put right or restored for His return.

The Messiah cannot return until the process of restoration is completed in the world. The restoration applies to many things, among others it means the church will be restored to the model of the early apostolic church of the first century.

The apostolic early church of the first century in Jerusalem and in the area of Middle East is the true biblical model given to us in the NT.

The early church lived and taught according to the teachings and practice of the Saviour and the apostles in alignment with the Scriptures. In the second, third and fourth centuries the rising church of Rome separated from its Jewish roots because of replacement theology and antisemitism. At the same time it broke away in many places from the truth of the Bible and included in Christian faith many traits of pagan cults, especially Babylonian mystery religion.

But it must be kept in mind that in the Roman Church as well as in all denominations there are sincere believers who live according to the teaching they have received. In His great mercy God has already allowed reformation and restoration cleanse – to some extent - the church of God of the spiritual darkness which has been blinding it during the centuries of corruption and apostasy after the times of the early church. This process of revival, reformation and restoration has made many

biblical truths emerge from the depths of spiritual darkness.

Let us look at some examples. Martin Luther introduced righteousness by grace, through faith in Yeshua. We do not need to try to earn salvation by good works nor through sale of indulgences practised by the Roman church. Luther also strongly emphasized the authority of the Bible.

Wesley and the Methodist church focused on the life of biblical sanctification. The Baptists highlighted biblical roots of the believers' water baptism. The Seventh-day Adventist church has emphasized shabbat, the original day of rest. The Salvation Army, founded by William Booth, focuses on charity and helping the needy. The Pentecostal movement, born in the early 1900 in Los Angeles, stresses the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit.

We need to bless all the biblical good we have received from God during this restoration process through various churches and revivals. But there are still many areas on which the work is incomplete so far, but with the help of the Holy One of Israel the process will be completed on the day of the Messiah's return.

God will finish His work putting right Israel, the church, time and calendar, the day of rest, the feasts of the Lord, the Torah, the earth, the creation and man. It is God's will that all believers from within and outside the churches collaborate in this process of restoration.

As for the church, this means returning to the whole truth of the Bible, to the Israeli roots of our faith and to the model, teaching and practice of the apostolic early church, of which we can read from the NT, Acts and Letters in particular.

What restoration does not mean

It is good to be precise about what restoration is not. The restoration of the church and the return to the Israeli roots of our faith does not mean gnostic heresy according to which the devil himself will eventually get from hell to heaven. Hell is the final and eternal place of the devil and his army (Matt 25:41; Rev 20:10). Restoration does not mean retur-

ning to the slavery of the Torah (the law). In the New Covenant we are under grace, not under law (Torah), and the restoration will take place on the basis of the grace and truth of the New Covenant (Rom 6:14,15).

Restoration does not mean converting into rabbinistic Judaism; instead it means returning to the whole truth of the whole Bible and to the teaching and practice of the apostolic early church as it is written in the New Testament and all the Holy Scriptures. Restoration does not mean establishment of a new church or denomination; it is about getting your heart obedient to what is written in the Holy Scriptures and follow the teaching and practice of the apostolic early church. This relates to all believers in Yeshua everywhere.

Restoration and Revival

We also need to consider the relationship between restoration and revival.

First we need to notice that although the word revival is widely used, it is never mentioned in the Bible. We understand this word to mean the work of God's Holy Spirit stirring up believers and non-believers so that believers are renewed and start to live according to the word of God.

Non-believers are filled with remorse, they repent and become obedient to the Lord. Let us take an example of this from the life of Israel in the days of the Old Covenant.

When Israel fell into apostasy, they ceased to obey the word of God and the commandments of the Lord. They no longer celebrated the shabbat, nor the feasts of the Lord. They violated the commandments, they forgot the Holy One of Israel, they worshipped idols, and the morals of the people collapsed.

God then had to discipline His own people in many ways, through famine, plague, enemy attacks, and finally through exile. Disciplining was His means to draw His people back to Him and to obey His word and commandments. When the people repented and were renewed, they restarted to celebrate the shabbat and the Lord's feasts, and to

obey the Lord's commandments.

This was the time of spiritual awakening, revival and restoration in the midst of Israel. One good example is the time of Nehemiah when the people returned from the exile of Babel to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

"On the second day, the heads of fathers' clans of all the people assembled with the cohanim [priests] and levim [Levites] before Ezra the Torah-teacher [scribe] to study the words of the Torah. They found written in the Torah that Adonai has ordered through Moshe that the people of Israel were to live in sukkot [booths] during the feast of the seventh month; and that they were to announce and pass the word in all their cities and in Yerushalayim, "Go out to the mountains, and collect branches of olives, wild olives, myrtles, palms, and other leafy trees to make sukkot, as prescribed."

So the people went out, brought them and made sukkot for themselves, each one on the roof of his house, also in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the house of God, in the open space by the Water Gate and in the open space by the Efrayim Gate.

The entire community of those who had returned from the exile made sukkot and lived in the sukkot, for the people of Israel had not done this since the days of Yeshua [Joshua] the son of Nun. So there was great joy. Also they read every day, from the first day until the last day, the scroll of the Torah of God. They kept the feast for seven days; then on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule." (Neh. 8:13-18)

This example of the days of Nehemiah proves how restoration came along with repentance, renewal and revival. The people started to live according to the Torah (instructions, teaching, doctrine, law) and the Lord's commandments; they kept the shabbat and the feasts, and returned to the God of Israel.

The same applies to the Christian world.

At the same time as God has given times of revival, from which various denominations and movements have been born, process of restoration and biblical truths

have also emerged from the night of apostasy and spiritual darkness.

In the end times, on the eve of the Messiah's return, the world will experience a huge pouring of the Holy Spirit and an amazingly strong revival; signs and wonders will happen, believers will be renewed, and many people will receive the Lord as their Saviour. The last global revival of this age of grace will also accomplish the process of restoration.

The Church of the Lord will be restored to unity, holiness, and obedience to the word, as in the times of the early church. The teaching and practice of the early church will be the practice of the apostolic church of the end times. Israel plays a crucial role in the restoration, because without Israel the restoration would be like eating chicken soup without chicken.

A bridge of unity of believers will be built between Messianic believers in Israel and Messianic believers in other nations (Rom.3:1-4, Eph.2:11-22). All areas of the restoration will be covered.

Apostasy of the End time and Restoration

"But in connection with the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and our gathering together to meet him, we ask you, brothers, not to be easily shaken in your thinking or anxious because of a spirit or a spoken message or a letter supposedly from us claiming that the Day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For the Day will not come until after the apostasy has come and the man who separates himself from the Torah has been revealed, the one destined for doom." (2 Tess. 2:1-3)

We'll now consider the twofold spiritual development of the end time. On the one hand the Bible speaks of apostasy and on the other of restoration.

Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians, chapter 2, and Matthew's gospel, chapters 24 and 25, reveal us that Christendom will, for the most part, be overcome by sleepiness, apostasy and lawlessness right before the Messiah's coming and the gathering

of the believers to the Lord in the rapture or in the resurrection (1 Thess 4:13-18; Matt.24:29-31).

Faith in God will diminish, the love of many believers will get cold, God's word and commandments will be abandoned, the authority of the Bible will be trampled on, and there are few who study the word of God and obey it.

The nearer the coming of the Messiah, the greater the corruption of the days of Noah; violence will fill the world and the sins of Sodom in the days of Lot will corrupt the humanity and the Christendom living in apostasy (Luke 17:24-30).

The lamp of God's word will go out in the apostate Christendom, the great Babylon of the end time (Rev. 17; 18:1-4,23). Believers sticking to the truth of the Bible will be despised, opposed, and even persecuted. We have entered this time. On the other hand, there will be the revival and the restoration of the end time, which Yeshua gave as a sign of His coming in Matthew 24.

"Tell us when these things happen. And what will be the sign that you are coming, and that the olam haze [this age] is ending?"... But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered. And this Good News about the Kingdom will be announced throughout the whole world as a witness to all the goyim [nations]. It is then that the end will come." (Matt.24:3, 13, 14)

"Yeshua went all over the Galil teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, and healing people from every kind of disease and sickness. The word of him spread throughout all Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill, suffering from various diseases and pains, and those held in the power of demons, and epileptics and paralytics; and he healed them. Huge crowds followed him from the Galil [Galilee] the Ten Towns [Decapolis], Yerushalayim, Yehudah [Judea] and Ever-Ha Yarden [the region across the Jordan]." (Matt.4:23-25)

The gospels tell us how Yeshua proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom nearly 2000 years ago to one people, the Jewish people. Those who were ill were healed,

the possessed were set free, even the dead were raised, and huge crowds came to listen to Yeshua's message in the waves of revival of that time. The good news of the Kingdom Yeshua proclaimed is the model for the good news of the Kingdom and revival of the end time, as the coming of the Messiah and the end of this age of grace draw near.

As signs of His coming and of the end times Yeshua names e.g. deception, earthquakes, famine, plague, rebellions, news of wars, nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom, persecution of believers, apostasy and time of great tribulation.

This is something we already can see around us in the world. Every day we hear news of war, in particular in the regions of the Mediterranean, i.e. the Great Sea, and the river Euphrates, as prophesied in the Bible (Dan.7; Rev.9:12-21). An additional sign is the proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom to all nations, and then the end will come.

In the end time, on the eve of the Messiah's coming, the gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to Israel and to all nations, and signs and wonders will accompany the preaching.

This short and powerful revival of the gospel of the Kingdom in this end time and the restoration of the church accompanying it will end with the coming of the Messiah and taking up to heavens of the church from the midst of the time of distress (Dan.12:1-3). That is when this age of grace will end.

Apostasy, restoration, and the ultimate revival will be parallel processes in this end time. Spiritually there will be only two groups on the final stretch of this age of grace: the great prostitute of Babylon of the book of Revelation and the restored apostolic church of the end time (Rev.18:1-4).

It is the will of God for us to be part of that restored church of the end time as well as of the revival and ministry of restoration in the power of the Spirit of Elijah, and the taking up into heavens at the coming of the Messiah (Mal.4:5,6; 1 Thess.4:13-18).

Living Torah

Yeshua and The Five Books of Moses



Written by:
Markus Nurmesniemi

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law (Torah) of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night" (Psalm 1:1,2).

"Do we then nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law" (Romans 3:31).

"So then, the law (Torah) is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good... We know that the law (Torah) is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as slave to sin" (Romans 7:12,14).

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law (Torah) or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law (Torah) until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will

be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practises and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:17-19).

"Christ is the end (end=telos=fulfilment, goal) of the law (Torah) so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4).

"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

"He said to them: 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law (Torah) of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms'" (Luke 24:44).

The Kingdom of God is not made of random symbols, rituals, doctrines, organizations, creeds, or even only of the Bible itself, but of that powerful reality to which all these point and lead us. They are signs and landmarks to God's Kingdom.

The Torah, the Law of God or the Law of Moses, as it is also called, is defined along the same li-

nes: "The Law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming – not the realities themselves" (Hebrews 10:1).

The Law can be divided roughly into three categories: sacrificial, ceremonial and moral laws. Yeshua changed the two first through His life and sacrificial death here on earth. In the new Covenant we give the sacrifice of praise with our lips and prayers, and we are cleansed by confessing our sins. Ceremonial laws were changed to follow the order of Melchizedek. Priestly laws could not make anyone perfect.

The letter to the Hebrews tells us about these changes in the Torah. Sacrificial and ceremonial laws were shadows of the future service of praise and worship sacrificed to the Lord of lords and the King of kings.

Does this mean that there is no need to pay attention to the law or to keep it? No more and no less than taking the holy communion wine and bread. All these are shadows of what is to come, foretaste of the coming goodness.

"Drink this in remembrance of

me" said Yeshua.

"Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me. For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor 11:25,26).

As we see, the Lord's supper is a shadow of the reality to come.

Shadow is 'tsel' in Hebrew. From the same root we have Betzalel "in the shadow of God"

"Resting in the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps 91:1) means dwelling in a place of safety and security. And we have "tzelem Elohim" - image of God. In the bottomline a shadow has a positive connotation in the Bible, far from being negative.

"Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ" (Col 2:17).

Everything centered in Yeshua

But if what is a shadow becomes the purpose in itself, things have

gone wrong. Religiousness and legalism can put out the Spirit and have people miss the purpose. During centuries Judaism has made the Torah their own religion, a circle of religiousness, with thousands of complementary laws and rabbinic traditions mixed into the word of God, pushing aside the real Torah.

So then, The Torah is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good (Romans 7:12). But as we read the Bible we can see the children of Israel failing to keep the Torah. The whole of Torah was commanded to be kept, but to a man it is an impossible task.

Thus the Torah reveals the sins of men. The goal and purpose in life is to compete on the way to the holiness the Torah is pointing to. Yet we are to humble and to confess ourselves that we cannot do it by ourselves.

Not by any human resources. Nevertheless it is a blessing to study the teachings and the instructions of our Lord, and that is what the Torah is calling us to do. We know we fall short, but it is a blessing to reach for the maturity Torah is calling us for, step by step.

Those steps are to be taken with Yeshua, without any legalism or self righteousness. And without any shallowness of religion, not focusing on the letter of Torah so much, but rather to the spirit and the purpose and teaching behind it.

To be able to really learn to know the life and teaching of Yeshua the Messiah we have to learn to read the Torah and the Prophets in a proper way. We need to find Yeshua in the Old Testament. Only then can we comprehend more fully the meaning of Yeshua's first coming as well as His second coming. Torah is connected to Yeshua's first coming, which is connected with His second coming. The most important thing is to find the heart of the Torah, its spirit, which is **justice, mercy and faithfulness**, as Yeshua puts it in Matthew 23:23.

What does 'Torah' mean?

The word 'Torah' is a red cloth to an average Sunday-service Christian believer. The word is automatically connected to law-

bound Judaism. Torah is considered as something indefinite, complicated, and messy Judaism one had better keep away from for fear of falling into a deep swamp. The heavy burden of the "law" would crush you.

Trying to keep the law as one keeps rituals, without the guidance and freedom of the Spirit of the Messiah, is keeping a dead letter. Furthermore, heaps of manmade rules and traditions have been added for the worshippers to observe. Apostle Paul warned us about this in his letters. Yeshua liberated us and gave us freedom.

These characteristics of Judaism are typical of orthodox Judaism, which puts heavy burdens on those living under the law. This Pharisee-like Judaism with its own manmade rules and traditions, Mishna, Talmud, and even Kabbala nowadays, was what Paul and the other apostles fought against.

Pharisees had absorbed the traditions already in mother's milk. Law for them equalled traditions. They claimed Moses had been given also the oral law on Mount Sinai. In the Pharisees' thinking the Torah, the five books of Moses, does not exist without the traditions.

Seen from this point of view it is no wonder Christendom does not want to have anything to do with the Torah. But does this perspective give justice to the Torah itself?

The word Torah does not appear in any Christian Bible version. It has been translated with the word 'law' without exception, which in itself is a proof of a biased attitude. The Hebrew word Torah means teaching and instruction. The root word 'yara' means instruction, teaching, laying the foundation and pointing to a right direction. Yara also means directing something or shooting in a right direction, like an archer shoots an arrow into the target, getting a bull's eye. The Hebrew word for 'sin' is **chata**, which, too, is connected to shooting arrows, but **chata** also means that one missed the target or the arrow didn't reach the target.

When we understand the word Torah in its original meaning, it contains ALL teaching and

instructions God has given people. All in all we can say that the whole Bible is the complete Torah.

In this essay the focus is on the five books of Moses, the Torah of old. In this essay the Torah means the five first books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomy). These are the only texts in the Bible that God spoke directly to a man ("Thus says the Lord, speak the following words to the children of Israel").

The books of Moses have been written as God dictated them, while all other books of the Bible (except parts of the Revelation that are dictated by God, too) have been inspired by God, and are thus texts based on messages or visions given by the Spirit.

God spoke His words in Hebrew; the Torah and most of the Bible have been written in Hebrew. We have good grounds to claim that Hebrew is a godly language; every letter and every word has their own rich meanings which contain numerous levels of interpretation and message, and mysteries. It is because of this that people who do not read Hebrew but have to put up with a translation miss so much of God's Word.

There was only one language in the world before the destruction of the tower of Babel, and it is justified to assume it was Hebrew. Many linguistic studies show that all the languages have their origin in one semic language. Semic languages are Hebrew, Arameic and Arabic a.o.

The Restoration of Torah

Apostle Paul, who has, in the midst of the Christianity, been considered being passionately against the Torah, says that "The Torah is holy and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good" (Rom 7:12). Ancient prophecies tell us that the honour of the Torah must be restored and that people will turn to God's whole word in the last days.

Past generations have inherited God's word interpreted through Replacement Theology but this will change.

"Oh Lord, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in time

of distress, to you the nations will come from the ends of the earth and say: Our fathers possessed nothing but false gods worthless idols that did them no good" (Jeremiah 16:19). "Many nations will come and say, 'come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jakob, He will teach us his ways so that we may walk in his paths. The law (Torah) will go out From Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Micah 4:2).

There are many reasons to Christians' negative attitude towards the Torah. Three most common reasons are due to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. These three misunderstandings have been forming the Christian way of thinking for centuries.

The sum of misconceptions

The first reason is because of the Replacement theology, the breaking away from the Hebrew roots of faith. Christian priests and leaders of congregations have been taught according to the doctrines of early Church fathers who denied the Jewish roots of faith.

During the first centuries these doctrines were highly antisemitic. Although many denominations have repented and asked for the Jewish people's forgiveness, these doctrines themselves are still alive in the denominations.

The impact of these doctrines can be seen in many Bible versions' biased interpretations. Furthermore, these doctrines have been influenced by humanistic philosophies of the academic world which have nothing to do with the Hebrew context nor the Word of God.

The second misunderstanding is due to an erroneous translation of the Word of God. Christian concepts have their origin largely in the Greek language. When the Scriptures (the books of Moses, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the Proverbs) were translated into Greek the translators noticed that the Hebrew had many words, idioms, and concepts the Greek language didn't have. They had to choose the next best translation which often enough was good, but unfortunately a couple of bad choices have given room to some

distorted theologies. The same method was used while translating the New Testament.

As the word Torah had no accurate equivalent in Greek, it was translated with a word contained in the word Torah: the law. The Torah contains commandments that can in principle be called 'laws'.

The word law in Greek is *nomos*. The Fifth Book of Moses is *Devarim* in Hebrew, "These are the words (*devarim*) that Moses spoke..." As these *devarim* point to the instructions and teachings God gave, the Greek *nomos* was added to the Hebrew *Devarim* that had been given the Greek form *Deutero*.

Thus the Fifth of Moses got its Greek name, *Deutero-nomos*, which describes the content of the book as a study of teaching and instructions. The word *Nomos* or Law came to stay in the different versions of the Bible.

The third misunderstanding comes from the human doctrines and traditions mentioned earlier. Today's Judaism is based on the doctrines of the Pharisees of the times of Yeshua. The written doctrinal foundation is focused on the five Books of Moses and only these books have been accepted by the Orthodox Jews. Even most Prophets but also Psalms and other Writings of the Tanach make an Orthodox Jew raise his brows.

The Torah, the five Books of Moses, is the cornerstone of Judaism. BUT, during centuries Jewish Rabbis have added thousands of oral laws and practices to the Torah. In Judaism the Rabbis have a self-given right and authority to increase or to diminish the commandments given in the Torah. It was this practice that Yeshua Himself talked and acted against.

The Holy Scriptures of the times of Yeshua and the apostles contained in addition to the Books of Moses the Prophets, the Proverbs and the Lamentations. These form the Tanach, the Old Testament. There were a few apocryphic writings as well. What we call the New Testament did not exist yet. The writings and the events included in the New Testament were being lived at that time. The Scriptures Yeshua and the apostles refer to or quote in the New Testament is the Tanach.

When the Apostle Paul speaks or writes about the Torah, he often refers to the whole Tanach, although the translations always give the word law in his mouth. The heart and center of the Torah are the commandments and rules God gave on Mount Sinai. In all his sayings, doings and writings Paul always has his focus on Yeshua.

The Writings of the Old Covenant were his toolbox.

Where does Torah point at?

Torah in ancient pictographic Hebrew:

ה 'hei' : look! Examine!
 רא 'resh' : Head, leader, man
 ו 'vav' : nail, hook
 ת 'tav' : sign, covenant, cross

or LOOK AT THE MAN NAILED ON THE CROSS (AS A SIGN OF COVENANT)

This message is found in the word Torah of ancient Hebrew centuries before the Messiah was born into this world. The Torah thus points to the Messiah.

God's teachings and instructions have always existed. Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and Abraham, they all knew God's instructions. When Israel was called out of Egypt she was given God's whole Torah on Mount Sinai as a seal of the covenant, a marriage covenant as it were, God had promised to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jakob. The Torah is God's marriage covenant with the people of Israel that He took to be His possession, His first Fruit and priestly people before all other peoples. Foreigners have access to that covenant through Yeshua.

Who then gave the Torah to Israel? Father God? God's Angel? Maybe Gabriel or Michael? Or the Saviour and Redeemer Himself, the Word of God, Yeshua? "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy" (James 4:12).

Yeshua said: "if you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Joh14:14). Saying this He also refers to the time where the Torah and the ten commandments were given on Mount Sinai and JHWH, the giver of the commandments, said to Moses: ...but showing love to a thousand gene-

rations of those who love me and keep my commandments" (Ex 20:6). Torah and the Word of God are synonyms.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men" (Joh1:1-4).

We know that Yeshua is the Word of God. We also know from the Scriptures that the Torah is a lamp and a light: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Ps 119:105).

Yeshua also said: "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to Father except through me" (Joh14:6). All of these three attributes: way, truth and life, are also attributes of the Torah. The Messiah claims thus to be the Torah, the Living Torah, and only by believing in Him may we have eternal life.

The Torah is referred to as light, path, and lamp. The New Testament is full of these synonyms of the Torah. The Tree of Life is considered to be one of Torah's names. There was a tree in the Garden of Eden called the Tree of Life, and we know that Yeshua was also called by this name. Adam and Eve were in the company of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden.

As a child of The Spirit, not of the letter

Keeping the teachings of Yeshua and observing the way He lived His life on earth we may conclude that the Lord fulfilled the Torah by keeping the Torah. We rejoice over the fact that He took away the curse of the Torah from us. After receiving the Defender, the Holy Spirit, we are to live the way the Torah teaches in the Spirit.

"I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord. They will be my people and I will be their God, for they will return to me (Teshuva, also used in the NT) with all their heart" (Jer 24:7).

"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people" (Jer

31:33).

The texts above are also quoted in the letter to the Hebrews (8:10), when the writer talks about the Torah being written on the hearts of believers. Born-again Christians act, maybe unknowingly, according to the core and spirit of the Torah when they do good deeds to their neighbours, treat people justly and love God! (Compare Matthew 23:23 "justice, mercy and faithfulness".) The writer of the Hebrews continues by explaining what has been changed in the Torah, that is animal sacrifice, function of the priesthood and the temple.

Yeshua says in Joh 5:39 and 46 that He is found in the Scriptures (for example Psalms and Prophets and the books of Moses) but that the veil still covers the eyes of the Jews (Rom 11 etc). From Romans 11 we learn that a non-Jew who believes in Yeshua and is born again from above will be grafted into the "olive tree of Israel".

This means that not only does the believer get all the rights of the Kingdom to be the child of God's Kingdom, but that alongside with the right come **the obligations** one of which is honouring the Torah.

This does NOT mean that for example keeping kosher will get you saved. Food has nothing to do with your salvation.

But God gives freely of His wisdom to His children also through the Torah, and having a healthy diet is naturally wise.

I personally came to the place where I WANTED to eat healthy, according to biblical diet, when I came to faith and found out about these things. It has never been a restriction to me, on the contrary. It has been just another revelation of the goodness and the caring personality of The Lord to me.

The Basis of the Modern Legal System

Originally the Torah was given to a people of slaves who had never known what it meant to be an independent nation. Israel increased and lived as slaves for centuries until God showed His power and separated them from the slavery of Egypt, or the world. He took Israel out of Egypt, and

a number of foreigners came out with them. God allowed them to join His people, which serves us as a foreshadow of what we read in Romans chapter 11.

There has always been a number of foreigners joining to Israel all through the biblical history.

To be able to act and live correctly and righteously as the people chosen by God Israel needed instructions, decrees and laws to guide them.

Israel had no experience of living as a people or a nation, but this is where God showed His power. God gave them the Torah and Israel started to learn how to live as a nation in all its aspects.

As we look at today's democratic nations we see that their legal systems are based on the Torah. We also see how rejecting God's commandments brings forth chaos and disorder in the society.

Now that we are believers of the New Covenant we need to see the Spirit of the Torah. The founding stone and heart of the Torah are the ten commandments.

All commandments, decrees and laws of the Torah are summed up in these ten commandments.

And these ten are divided in two groups: commandments pertaining to our relation to God and those pertaining to our relation to our neighbours.

See The Teaching of The Almighty Behind the Letter

Yeshua taught about this in a very Jewish way, which only opens to us if we approach the New Testament from a Hebrew perspective and mindset. When the experts of the law tried to test Yeshua by asking Him what was the greatest commandment, He replied:

"Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:37-40).

How did Yeshua teach? Like one who has all the power. Yeshua used rabbinic methods to make His message understood in the

surrounding Hebrew society. The Torah is more than a guide to how to cultivate your relationship with God (Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind), it is also a guide of how to treat your neighbour (Love your neighbour as yourself).

Yeshua summed up ALL commandments into those two commandments (Paul does the same in Romans 13:8-9). At the same time Yeshua lets us know that it is more important to love God than to try to concentrate in keeping strictly the legal system of the Torah. This might seem complicated at first sight but the Holy Spirit will guide us.

There is no need to try to keep all literally, instead, behind every instruction and decree we need to see the grace of God and His will to build us. We need to see where the Torah is pointing to.

Our Lord taught that it is all right to do good on a Sabbath day as the Pharisees reprimanded Him of breaking the total rest.

"Going on from that place he went into their synagogue, and a man with a shrivelled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus they asked him, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?' He said to them, 'if any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath. Then he said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other" (Matthew 12:9-13).

Yeshua did by no means agree with these man-made commandments the Pharisees had added to the Torah and which even today's Judaism expects people to keep.

"Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 'Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!' Jesus replied, 'And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?'" (Matt 15:1-3).

Yeshua goes on quoting Isaiah:

"You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: These people honour me with their lips but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught my men" (Matt 15:7-9).

But now, instead of the hearts of stone, the Torah has been written in the hearts of flesh of born-again believers. The Holy Spirit reveals what is right and what is wrong.

"He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant – not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor 3:6).

No to Rabbinical Ways

The Messiah, the living Torah of God, reigns in the innermost of a believer, that is why a believer is no longer under the letter of the law. Keeping the law outwardly, without Yeshua and the gift of faith, will never bring our hearts in a right position before God. Now that the very Lord of the Law lives in a believer, the Torah has become a second nature of a believer.

It is pleasing to God to demonstrate obedience and study the Torah on the basis of grace and freedom. The word of God never fails, and blessed is the man who keeps it.

We shouldn't get mixed up in the depths of the rabbinic Judaism, but we should see all the good that has been brought forth through the industrious study of the Word the Rabbis (today especially Messianic Rabbis) have committed themselves to during thousands of years.

These scholars have discovered several levels and keys of understanding which help us dig deeper into the Word.

There is a Jewish saying: "The Torah has 70 faces."

It is interesting that biblically interpreted the number 70 also means all the nations. According to the Torah 70 nations equals to all the nations.

Noah had 70 grandsons, and from their descendants came the 70 nations of the ancient history. (Gen 9:19.)

Thus we could say that this saying also refers to the fact that the Torah or the instructions of God

are meant for all the nations and not only for the Jews.

The Levels of Understanding The Torah

These "faces" can be summed up in four levels of understanding of the Torah, which teach us how to study and meditate the Word under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

These are the levels of understanding that the writers of the New Testament, Brit Chadasha, used as they wrote the Holy Scriptures in their time.

Rabbi Shaul, or Paul, studied under Gamaliel, the great teacher. Gamaliel was the grandson of Rabbi Hillel. Hillel was the first to lay the foundations of the principles of hermeneutics, or interpretation of the Bible, in Judaism. These rules of interpretation, also used by the writers of the NT, are the same principles all the Hebrew scholars of the Torah and the Prophets used.

It would benefit us, too, to try to understand these rules. (In upcoming edition of Yovel we will see how Paul uses the writings of the Torah and their interpretations while writing to NT believers, in his letter to the Galatians, for instance.)

The four levels of understanding of the Torah:

Peshat literal, simple, visible level

Remez hinting, giving direction/initiating, to be read between the lines, referring

Derash symbolic, a critical explanation or interpretation (exegetic)

Sod spiritual, the core and deepest meaning, "hidden"

The first letters of these words give the word 'pardesh', which means a garden, a paradise, an acronym that explains the totality of the understanding of the Torah with all its treasures. In other words, as the reader seeks to understand and study the Torah using all four levels, the Torah then becomes a paradise for the one who studies it. At the same time the Torah circles the garden by a fence thus showing the boundaries for good living. Yeshua is the Good Shepherd of that corral. The Torah points to Yeshua.

The level called 'sod', the deepest level, reveals Yeshua in the Torah, gives revelations of His coming and of His love. When Yeshua came for the first time on earth, He used much the levels 'remez' and 'derash' as he draw examples of the Torah in His teachings.

Revolutionary Sermon on the Mount

A revolutionary proclamation concerning the fulfilling of the Torah and its correct interpretation was made on the Mount of Beatitudes, place where our Redeemer gave His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7, a.o.). When Yeshua said that He hadn't come to 'abolish' the law nor the Prophets but to 'fulfil' them He was using Jewish terminology.

'To abolish' means to give an incorrect interpretation, and 'to fulfil' means to give a correct interpretation.

The foundation of Yeshua's teaching and work is the correct interpretation of the Torah. The whole New Testament is thus giving account of how the Lord fulfilled the Torah.

The Sermon on the Mount is the most essential teaching for today's Christianity. Tragically many have abandoned this teaching in the past years.

About the concept of 'Works of the Law'

The way of thinking, the traditions, and the customs of 2000 years are so deep in a Christian's identity that it takes a huge process to change them. The Christian way of thinking is mostly western and hellenistic and has only little in common with the Hebrew way of thinking.

"The works/deeds of law", of which Paul frequently writes, refer to deeds without genuine faith as well as to the oral law, which Moses is said to have received from God in addition to the Law given in the Bible.

Later the tradition of those oral laws was compiled into Mishna, which become later a part of Talmud, a commentary of complementary oral laws.

New man-made rules, decrees and commandments were added

to it continuously. This is a Jewish tradition according to which rabbinic Jews lived and still live.

There are two Talmuds, the Babylonian and the Jerusalem Talmud, with slight differences.

The meaning of the expression 'works of the law' is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. These scrolls consist of approximately 850 writings that were found during the years 1947-56 in eleven caves in Qumran, Israel, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea (according undated information more caves have been found later on). These writings written on scrolls of skin and papyrus contain, besides the manuscripts of OT books, also texts and rules about the interpretation of the law.

According to the scholars who have studied the scrolls the term "works of the law" refers directly to oral law and several man-made complementary rules concerning the keeping of the Torah. These rules do not appear in the Bible nor in the Torah included in it.

This analysis has been made among others by John Strugnell, expert on oriental languages, and Elisha Qimron, Professor of the ancient Hebrew. The Qumran Scrolls have been of great help to scholars of the Word.

It is interesting that the caves where the scrolls were hidden were found in the year 1947. This was the year the United Nations signed a written agreement on the founding of the state of Israel.

It is easier to understand what is meant by the works of the law if one bears in mind judaistic traditions. Nowhere in the Bible are we told to get up and out of bed on our right foot, or tie our shoe laces in a certain manner. These are just two examples of a great number of traditions people were expected to keep.

In a Church separated from its roots the idea of 'works of law' is difficult to comprehend. The Torah is considered a heap of do's and don't's, which limits and diminishes the Torah and stamps it with a staple of legalism.

I don't know how well this is known in priestly circles, but at least they do not admit it. If they admitted their misinterpretation, the Replacement theology would be totaled.

Our protestant priests have been educated in an academic environment deeply rooted in Greek philosophy which differs completely from the Hebrew way to think and see the world and the Writings.

Summa summarum: The Replacement theology is based on the separation of Jewishness, and Jewishness is based on the Torah. I repeat the Torah, not Talmud, nor Mishna, nor Kabbala.

And we have been saved through Yeshua the Messiah, The Living Torah, redeemed from the curse of the letter to freedom.

"We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God[a] is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did." (1st John 2: 3-6)

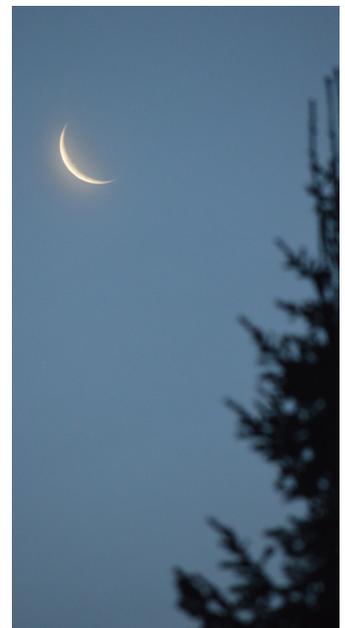
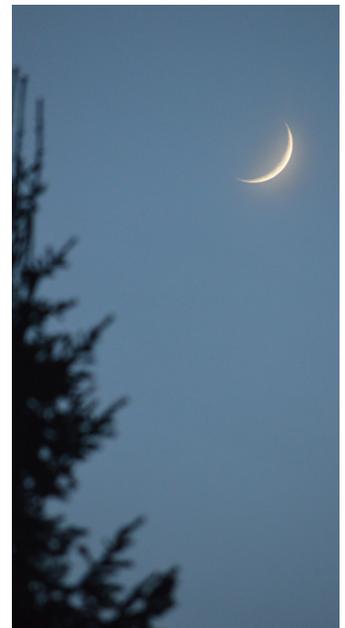
"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him.

And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us."

(1. Joh. 3: 18-24)

"If you love me, keep my commands."

(John 14: 15)



Presenting

Dr Clifford Denton

My desire to promote the restoration of the roots of the Christian faith began in an unexpected way.

I knew the call of God on my life from an early age but did not receive clear direction until the mid-1980s.

After a short career as an RAF Pilot I went into teaching and then educational research, looking into the education of gifted children at Oxford University, waiting for clear guidance by God.

Even though I had made my early commitment to God I began to sense that I should go through the waters of baptism and it was shortly after this that the Holy Spirit began to lead me forward.

I was shown a vision of many converts from the Muslim world



and also came to understand that there would be a growth of the Islamic challenge in the West.

I sought to make the leaders of Great Britain aware of this challenge.

I also began to research the growth of the New Age Movement and recognised areas of compromise to the spirit of this

movement in the Church.

It was therefore in response to growing deception and fresh challenges to the Christian Church that I sought an answer in deeper aspects of truth.

I left my research work at Oxford behind me in obedience to this call.

This search for truth led me to realise that restoration to the original biblically Hebraic roots of Christianity was the means of strengthening the Church for challenging days ahead, linked also to a restoration of relationship with Israel.

We launched a journal entitled Tishrei to explore the Jewish roots of the Christian faith and became part of this growing movement that goes on to today.

I see this as a time of prophetic fulfilment in Israel, and in the Christian Church at a time of the shaking of the nations foretold by the Prophet Haggai.

We are part way into this, have learned a lot along the way, and have much more still to accomplish before the return of Yeshua Hamashiach.

The Feasts of The Lord

And The Restoration Concerning

Written by:
Clifford Denton

Imagine the whole world living in submission to God, abiding in the saving grace of Yeshua Hamashiach by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Suppose that the Church had not distanced itself from its Jewish roots. From among the appointed Feasts of the Lord, consider, for example, what the Sabbath Day would be like. It would be a day when people everywhere would

cease their ordinary work and when they would worship the Lord from their hearts and minds, not because they had to, but because they wanted to.

As the sun dropped over the horizon for each nation in turn, so rest would come to that nation. Over a twenty-four hour cycle, perhaps beginning in Israel if the international date line were to be reset through Jerusalem, a wave of rest, peace and worship would arise following the course of the sun from East to West across the

earth.

As the sun completed its cycle around the earth so a new week would then be ushered in through the next twenty-four hours in a similar way.

The Sabbath Rest would be blessed by God and it would be as if His Heavenly hand passed gently over the whole earth, bathing it in peace country by country, nation by nation.

**The Sabbath in Yeshua,
The Sabbath in Every Day Life**

Of course the true Sabbath Rest is found in Yeshua for all who believe in Him, so an inner rest and peace would also be evident for the six working days of the week, finding a particular emphasis on every weekly Sabbath.

It depends on a number of theological standpoints, including the doctrine of election, as to whether this picture of the Sabbath could ever have been possible, and in the reality of this fallen world I could be called a

mystic or romancer for creating such a picture. Yet I wonder. Perhaps my vision is exactly what the Lord Himself desired when He first said, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy". He set before Moses a command that could have been understood by the whole world one day.

We are so used to falling short of the mark that we don't hold such high visions easily, and we tend to excuse ourselves when it is pointed out how far short of the mark we have fallen, even interpreting the Biblical laws to justify our actions.

Indeed, when the Church drifted from its Jewish roots, what seemed like good reasons were given to alter the Sabbath Day from Saturday to Sunday, but now there is a discontinuity across the world in the celebration of the Sabbath.

This has been so firmly established that, even though it is so obviously wrong when one is in fellowship with Jewish believers (or even when one simply experiences the Sabbath Day in the nation of Israel), it is very difficult to remedy things.

Far from consideration of the whole world keeping the Sabbath Day, the worldwide community of believers is not in harmony on this matter nor on other matters concerning the Feasts.

Traditions, Traditions...

The problem of remedy is related to the traditions of family and community as well as the pressures of secular society.

It is not a bit of good trying to force change in a ritual or legalistic way, and the Sabbath is just one of the issues to consider, which I am using to illustrate the point.

When we consider the full cycle of Feasts of the Lord as they are set out in Scripture, particularly

Leviticus 23, then the whole issue of the drift from the Jewish roots is evident, and there seems that there is very much to be done by way of recovery.

If we were to consider each of the appointed Feasts in turn, in the context of their relevance to Gentile believers, then we would discover that these are deep and important issues indeed.

Only recently, after many centuries, are some Christians celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles, yet Christmas has long been established as a major festival, while being nowhere to be found in the Scriptures.

Easter (named after the Goddess Ishtar) does not usually coincide with Passover on the Christian calendar, even though it was intended as a celebration of the ultimate meaning of Passover.

Instead of celebrating Passover according to the Biblical calendar, Christians have deliberately taken over a pagan feast day for the purpose.

Israel in The Center

These are two clear examples of how the Biblical pattern has been ignored among Christians, but now that the role of Israel is being re-established in our generation these things are becoming clear. As we are looking towards the fulfillment of the promise of salvation for this nation (Romans 11), then issues relating to the Feasts are becoming more relevant, inconsistencies are being highlighted, and it is time for adjustments to be considered in the Gentile Church.

There is no doubt that God has, and still does, bless Sunday worship, Easter and Christmas. Yet some of these blessings are not as they once were, particularly in the context of secular society re-

paganising many of the Christian traditions.

We must consider if there is a gradual adjustment that Gentile believers should begin to make in some or all of the areas relating to the Feasts. I say gradual, because the last thing that is intended is legalism (see my article on law and grace in this issue of the Tishrei journal (and perhaps to be published in Yovel as well, says Markus)).

The injunctions of Leviticus 23 are straightforward and their emphasis and content should be compared with the emphasis and content of present Christian traditions.

Also, however, much has come into Jewish tradition that is not in Scripture, some of which is very good, but not essential.

We have an exploration before us that allows us to take the best of Jewish tradition whilst not losing sight of flexibility in our own practice.

My own family, for example, has experimented with Sabbath observance enough to know that one can easily force issues into unnecessary tradition that can become lifeless.

Yet it is good to have a family meal when the sun has gone on Sabbath Eve and to pray together, making this a focus of the week, inviting guests to this meal and discussing Scripture as the meal proceeds.

In Holy Spirit's Guidance

Indeed, it is important to emphasise that Sabbath is from evening to evening rather than just through daylight hours.

The rush can be taken out of daytime observance by preparing in this way the evening before. Yet it is quite difficult to change

from Sunday to Saturday if one is not a part of a Christian community that does this together.

It is easy to strain out gnats and swallow camels, because we are a part of our families and our communities and it is of high priority to be in unity.

Christian traditions are so deeply established that it will take some time to make adjustments, and I would suggest that the Lord will bless our efforts as we seek to make any adjustments step by step, conscious of one another's stage of growth, willingness and understanding.

The Holy Spirit is gracious and loving and the best and most patient of teachers and He will speak to us about all of the other Feasts as well as the weekly Sabbath, which is probably one of the easier things to change.

"...That all of them may be One..."

Yet when the bottom line is drawn, we will discover that a Scriptural establishment of the appointed Feasts of the Lord among Gentile believers will bring a new depth of relationship with the Lord and will be a part of the process of re-establishing the roots of our faith.

We will have a maturer meditation on the yearly cycle, on the plan of salvation and on the whole sweep of history, seeing the Lord at the centre of it all.

It will also be a part of the means by which Jewish and Gentile believers will become one body as the sun goes down on the history of this age and the final Sabbath Rest is drawing near.

(Re-edit from Tishrei Vol2, No 1, The Feasts, Autumn 1993)

Presenting

Paul Sumner



The Psalms labeled “Shir haMa’alot” (Song of Ascents, 120-134) were sung by Israelite pilgrims as they ascended the roads up to the Temple in Jerusalem to worship God.

These psalms describe my life journey from the lowlands of Western Christian culture toward the higher, clearer vistas on the slopes of Mount Zion.

I was not raised in the church. I came to “Jesus” in my late teens via the road of philosophy and

English literature. As an American, born in the mountain west with a traditionless frontier mentality, I grew up longing for older and deeper things.

In time, people helped me see that Jesus was old and deep.

After a retired pastor unfolded the riches of Hebrew Scripture, I was drawn to Judaism. Jesus became, to me, “Yeshua,” and he fit perfectly within Judaism.

Perfectly?

No. Yeshua doesn’t fit within Judaism; he’s too big.

When Isaiah got a glimpse of God in the temple, he saw only the “hem of his robe,” and it filled the whole building (Isa 6).

Many of you have learned, as did I, that “Judaism” in the Bible is not the Judaism created by the post-AD-70 rabbis.

(Nor is “Christianity” today iden-

tical to what we see in the New Testament.)

In time, my longing for a home within Judaism—among the Jewish people—eventually collapsed. I was a homeless follower of Yeshua. Thank the Lord!

Throughout Scripture God says he will search for and gather remnants of non-Jews (Heb. goyim), and join them to a believing remnant of his people Israel. Non-Jews don’t become “Jews,” and we don’t have rights of citizenship in the State of Israel.

Better than that: we are disciples of the Messiah of Israel and as co-heirs with believing Israel we share in his gift of life eternal, both now and in ages to come (Eph 2:7; 3:6).

So, we should glory in our specific identity as members of the Nations, for we fulfill prophecy (Gen 12:2-3; Dan 7:14; Rev 5:9-10).

Today, Gentile Messianic disciples are scattered across diverse frontiers, in the outback and the wilderness.

That’s good.

It’s out here that God can be closest to us. Hosea describes Israel’s time in the Wilderness as her honeymoon with her Husband (11:4).

While waiting “the restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21), let’s be who we are, with spirits ascending to the Mount Zion that is to come (Hebrew 13:14).

American Paul Sumner has studied Hebrew origins of our faith all the way from the early 1970’s. This journey was deepened by trips to Israel, studies at two seminaries and two colleges, and especially by sitting under an elderly, wise, non-Jewish, Hebrew tutor.

The Third Day

Resurrection Patterns in the Hebrew Bible

Written by:
Paul Sumner

IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15, Paul makes a perplexing statement about Yeshua: “He was buried and raised on the third day [te hema- ra te trite] according to the Scriptures” (v. 4).

It’s perplexing because there is no explicit prediction in the

Hebrew Bible about the Messiah dying and rising on the third day. Where did Paul get the idea?

Did he have a different version of the Tanakh than we have? Did he make it up from his own imagination in order to deceive people ignorant of the Bible?

Paul is actually alluding to comments made by Yeshua.

Then [Yeshua] opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day [te trite hema- ra]” (Luke 24:46).

Yeshua repeatedly predicted he would die and lie in the earth for three days and three nights befo-

re being raised up by God (Matthew 12:40; 16:21; 17:23). [See the NT list of passages saying that God Raised the Lord.]

This passage then is the source of Paul’s statement.

But it doesn’t solve the puzzle. Where is it written in Scripture about the Messiah rising on the third day?

To Open What is Written

Since no passage literally contains this idea, we must look for other ways in which the prophecy may be "written."

Note that Yeshua "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." He didn't merely quote chapter and verse proof-texts. He expanded their understanding of biblical truths in ways previously closed. He was interpreting the Bible to them.

That's what we must do as well. But since we don't have records of what he specifically taught his disciples on this subject, we have to proceed carefully. Our interpretations must remain proposals, nothing more. We can't be dogmatic about our puzzle solutions.

I propose a partial solution based on three observations.

The first is the pattern of events that occur on "the third day" in the Hebrew Bible.

The second is the biblical declaration that Israel as a people is God's son (Exod 4:22; Deut 14:1). The third is that Yeshua identified himself with Israel. What is said about the nation can be applied to him.

Third Day Events

In the following passages, notice what occurs on Yom Shlishi, the Third Day.

1) On the third day — "the earth brought forth vegetation: seed-bearing plants of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit." (Genesis 1:12)

2) On the third day — "Abraham looked up and saw the place [Mount Moriah] from afar." There he intends to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering to God. Yet he assures his companions, "We will worship and return." (Genesis 22:4-5)

3) On the third day — Pharaoh releases his chief cupbearer from death-row. (Genesis 40:20-21)

4) On the third day — Joseph releases his brothers from prison in Egypt. (Genesis 42:17-18)

5) On the third day — The Israelites request Pharaoh's permission to make a three-day journey to offer sacrifice in the desert to God. (Exodus 3:18)

6) On the third day — Plague Nine, the Plague of Darkness, in Egypt ends, "though the Israelites enjoyed light in their dwellings." (Exodus 10:22)

7) On the third day — God descends to Mount Sinai in fire with the sound of a shofar. He then reveals The Ten Words, Israel's constitution of new life as a nation after their resurrection from the death of slavery in Egypt. (Exodus 19:16-19)

8) On the third day — Israelites are to purify themselves with water after being in contact with the dead. (Numbers 19:12)

9) On the third day — After coming to the river and preparing themselves, the Israelites cross the Jordan "to enter and possess the land that the LORD [their] God is giving to [them] as a possession." (Joshua 1:11; 3:2)

10) On the third day — Joshua's spies emerge from hiding from the Jerichoites, then return to their commander. (Joshua 2:16, 22)

11) On the third day — after asking God for release, King Hezekiah is healed of his fatal disease and offers thanks in the temple. (2 Kings 20:5)

12) On the third day — Jonah is expelled from the fish belly. (Jonah 1:17/2:1 Heb) (Matt 12:40; cf. Matt 16:21; 17:23)

13) On the third day — After fasting, Esther puts on royal apparel and enters the palace of the Persian king in order to thwart a death-plot against her people, the Jews. (Esther 4:16; 5:1)

Note also similar events in the third year:

14) In the third year [day] — a famine during David's reign ends. (2 Samuel 21:1). [Years often parallel days; 40 years = 40 days in wilderness.]

15) In the third year [day] — a famine called for by Elijah the prophet ends. (1 Kings 18:1)

Summary of Third Day Patterns
In this patterns we see the following:

The two days leading up to the

third day are a time of

- concealment, seclusion, "burial" (#3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 15)

- preparation to serve or meet God (1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13)

- testing, discerning, approaching a verdict: death or acquittal (3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 14, 15)

The third day is one of

- emergence from circumstances of lifelessness (prison, captivity, famine, illness, or ocean fish)

- testing situations when a life is put on the line but obedience wins unexpected reversal and deliverance

- appearance of new life after concealment or death

- sprouting life from the new earth

- revival, healing, or restoration of life

Thus the third day is a transition moment of release from realms of death or emergence of new life.

God Kills His Son, Then Raises Him.

There is a third day passage that can be more directly connected to Yeshua. In the Hebrew Scriptures, Israel is God's son.

Exodus 4:22 — "Thus says the LORD, 'Israel is my son, my first-born.'"

Deuteronomy 14:1 — "You are the sons of the LORD your God." But over time, family presumption takes over. "Sons have I reared and brought up, but they have revolted against me" (Isaiah 1:2).

The prophet Hosea likewise reminds the nation of their familial identity. Speaking with God's voice, he says: "When Israel was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son" (11:1).

This reminder amplifies the pathos of the divine decision: Israel was born a son by emerging from Egypt. Now Israel, the son of God, must die.

This will occur because of his unrelenting rebellion against his Father. In blood-freezing detail, God promises ultimate chastisement of his children:

I will be like a lion to Ephraim,
And like a young lion to the house of Judah.

I, even I, will tear to pieces and go away ...

I will go away and return to my place

Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face.

(Hosea 13:7-8; 5:14-15)

Such a prophecy shocks us. What could be more horrifying than death at the hands of your father? Fatal prophecies however often contain hope. For not even death at the terrible hands of his Father can utterly separate Israel from God.

Hosea consoles:

Come, let us return to the LORD. For he has torn us, but he will heal us; He has wounded us, but he will bandage us. He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day

That we may live before him....

He will come to us like the rain,
Like the spring rain watering the [dead] earth.

(Hosea 6:1-3)

Jewish translators of the Hebrew Bible into the Aramaic targums, saw in Hosea 6:2 an allusion to future resurrection: "He will give us life in the days of consolations that will come. On the day of resurrection of the dead, he will raise us up and we shall live before him" (Targum of the Minor Prophets). [Note 1]
In another passage, God explicitly promises deliverance for Son-Israel.

I will ransom them from the power of Sheol;

I will redeem them from death [mi-mavet].

O Death, where are your thorns?
O Sheol, where is your sting? (Hosea 13:14)

After his son's death, the Father will raise him from the grave (the place of separation) on the third

day. God's new life will be like spring rain.

Messiah is Israel Too

In the ideology of the Tanakh, the Mashiach dwells within the defining circle of the name "Israel" [compare Isaiah 44:1-2 with 49:5-7]. There is a larger Israel and an inner Israel. Mashiach is inner Israel; he too is God's son.

As a family member, he experiences their sorrow, though not for his own sins. He suffers the chastisement due everyone else. "He was wounded because of our sins, crushed because of our iniquities ... the LORD visited upon him the guilt of all of us" (Isaiah 53:5-6).

This doesn't happen by accident:

"the LORD was pleased to crush him" (v. 10).

So severe is the crushing that he dies: "He was cut off from the land of the living" (v. 8).

But even if he perishes (like his people) — being torn and crushed and murdered by the lion-God — he also basks in the life-warmth of the other, ultimate promises of God:

"He will raise [me] up on the third day ... He will ransom [me] from death" — like his people.

Repeatedly, Yeshua foretold he was destined for suffering and death. Like the prophets of old, he would be rejected by the religious and political heads of Israel. Donning the mantle of the Servant of the LORD, he would become "the Despised One [ba-

zoh nefesh], the One Abhorred [meta'ev] by the nation" (Isaiah 49:7).

But he knew there was more beyond the rejection and killing. He knew the entire Scripture. He knew the third day was coming. Where is it Written?

The scriptures about revival events on the Third Day and those about Son-Israel's revival on the third day all form a pattern. God orchestrates dramatic things after two days.

When the powers of tohu vavohu, chaos and void, darkness and death, seem indomitable, he disrupts them and establishes order. When all seems hopeless, he is the hope giver.

The first two days don't tell the whole story. On the third, he writes the conclusion.

Is this third day pattern part of what Yeshua meant when he said "Thus it is written"? Is this what he opened the minds of his disciples to see? Perhaps.

We learn from careful study elsewhere that the spirit of prophecy breathes in ways we don't immediately comprehend.

Prophecy is not mere pre-telling of events with indisputable dates and names.

It's often an act of weaving patterns deep into the fabric of Scripture, only to one day see them appear in bold relief under new light.



Prophetic Perspectives

Middle East in the prophetic light of the Bible

Written by:
Keijo Lindeman

The Bible tells us that our knowledge is partial and our prophecy is partial; therefore we will study biblical prophecies in the light of the partial knowledge and understanding God has given us (1 Cor.13:9).

When the disciples asked Yeshua what the sign of His coming and of the end of the age would be Yeshua gave them a broad prophetic overview of the issue. Yeshua's prophetic speech on the signs of His coming is written in the gospels of Matthew 24 and 25, Mark 13, and Luke 17 and 21. Among the signs of the end time are deception, false prophets and messiahs; love of believers will grow cold; believers, Jews, and Israel will be hated; lawlessness, violence and moral corruption like in the days of Noah; sins of Sodom in Lot's days, plagues, revolts and riots, news of war, nation against nation, and times of great tribulation.

And the proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom in the great revival of the end time (Matt.24:14, 4:23-25). We also know from Bible prophecies that Middle east and the regions of the Mediterranean as well as the regions of the river Euphrates will be in the prophetic spotlight in these events of the end time.

Unrest in the Mediterranean area

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babel, Daniel had a dream and visions in his head, as he was lying on his bed. He wrote the dream down, and this is his account: I had a vision at night: I saw there before me the four winds of the sky breaking out over the great

sea, and four huge animals came up out of the sea, each different from the others. The first was like a lion, but it had eagle's wings. As I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted off the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a human heart was given to it. Then there was another animal, a second one, like a bear. It raised itself up on one side, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, "Get up, and gorge yourself with flesh!"(Dan.7:1-5; D.Stern, Complete Jewish Bible).

In his vision at night Daniel was watching the great sea churned up by the four winds of the sky. According to Zechariah 6 and Revelation 6 those four winds are religious, military, economical, and political winds that churn the great sea. To begin with, the churning sea refers to the agitated ungodly masses of nations of the world (Isa.57:20). All the world will be caught up in a religious, military, economical, and political tumult in the end time. Secondly, the great sea refers literally also to the Mediterranean Sea that God has placed as the western border of Israel (Num.34:6, Jos.1:4).

This means that the Mediterranean area will be like a churning sea in the end time. The tumults began in Tunisia spreading out to Libya, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, even Greece. As a matter of fact, all the nations of the Middle east are caught up in this agitation. When it started, it was called 'the Arab spring', but the spring has turned out to be a gloomy dark autumn with huge fighting and terror in the Middle east and elsewhere. It has brought chaos into the Middle east and partly to the whole world. Alongside the poverty of Africa, this chaos has

also caused a great refugee crisis.

The Beast Kingdoms of the End Time will come up from the Depths of the Churning Sea

Four beasts (beast kingdoms) will rise from the sea of nations: lion, bear, leopard, and the fourth dreadful, horrible beast (Dan.7). Seen from a historical perspective these beast kingdoms are: Babel or Babylon that rose to power with Nebuchadnezzar; Media and Persia, which defeated Babylonian empire in the days of Cyrus; Macedonia-Greece, which, led by Alexander the Great, defeated Persia. The fourth beast kingdom is the iron Rome which will continue in power until the Messiah's thousand year reign, in some way at any rate, first under the rule of an emperor then under the rule of a pope, as Daniel 7 shows. The horn of the Roman beast has also changed the times and the law.

In the end time these four beast kingdoms fulfill the prophecies. I see them as follows: the first is the lion of Judah – equipped with the wings of the eagle of the USA (Num.24:1,9). But the wings of the eagle will be torn off the lion. The USA will stop supporting Israel at some point, and Israel has to turn to her God and her Messiah Yeshua only. The lion will be lifted up on two feet like a man and it will be given a man's heart. Israel will humble herself in the distress and receive her Messiah Yeshua, and she will be the Messianic priestly people for the future Kingdom of the Messiah (Isa.2:1-4,11; 61:4-6; Zec.12; Rev.20).

The second beast – the bear of Russia – has turned over. Communism came to an end, "Putinism" began. The bear started to growl, followed by the crisis

of Ukraine and strained relations with the West. Now the relations are even more strained because of the situation in the Middle east and Syria in particular. Three ribs will appear between the teeth of the bear. According to many prophecies those would be the Baltic countries, or the northern parts of Finland, Sweden, and Norway. Both alternatives are possible. The future will show how the prophecies come true. Finally the bear will stand up and maul nations. In this connection we shall not discuss the third beast, the leopard of Germany, nor the fourth beast, the ultimate antimessianic reign of terror of Rome.

The Area of the River Euphrates in the Prophecy of the Book of Revelation

"The first woe has passed, but there are still two woes to come. The sixth angel sounded his shofar, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the gold altar before God, saying to the sixth angel, the one with the shofar, 'Release the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates!' And they were released. These four angels had been kept ready for this moment, for this day and month and year, to kill a third of mankind; and the number of cavalry soldiers was two hundred million! - I heard the number. Here is how the horses looked in the vision: the riders had breastplates that were fire-red, iris-blue and sulfur-yellow; the horses' heads were like lions' heads; and from their mouths issued fire, smoke, and sulfur. It was these three plagues that killed a third of mankind – the fire, smoke and sulfur issuing from the horses' mouths. For the power of the horses was in their mouths – and also in their tails, for their tails were like sna-

kes with heads, and with them they could cause injury. The rest of mankind, those who were not killed by these plagues, even then did not turn from what they had made with their own hands – they did not stop worshipping demons and idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they turn from their murdering, their involvement with the occult and with drugs, their sexual immorality or their stealing.” (Rev.9:12-21, D.Stern)

This prophecy about the river Euphrates and the four angels in Revelation 9 relates to the events in the Middle East. At the sound of the sixth trumpet the four evil angels that have been bound at the river Euphrates are released. All this happens according to God’s agenda, to the year, to the month, to the day, and to the hour. The war will then spread out so that eventually 200 million soldiers will be fighting all over the world, and the war will culminate in atom war that will kill a third of mankind.

The church of the Messiah will not be left to see the atom war, but it will be rescued from it just as Lot was rescued from fire and sulphur that destroyed Sodom (Luke 17:26-30).

It is interesting to see that by the river Euphrates there are four nations that are at war at this very moment: Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey. Syria and Iraq in particular are in the state of chaotic war with Sunni muslims and Shia muslims, supported by Iran, fighting for power, and it seems that everybody is against everybody.

The superpowers also are mixed up in this. Russia and Iran support their ally Syria, and Russia has sent there arms and troupes, mostly air force arsenal and staff, while the US, the West and Sunni nations support the so called moderate Sunni rebels and seek to remove Assad from power. One gets the impression that things

are beginning to take the form of the war described in Psalm 83 and the war of Gog prophesied in Ezekiel 38 and 39. For instance, Beth Togarmah, i.e. Turkey, has moved closer to the Gog alliance led by Russia, as prophesied by Ezekiel (Ezek. 38:1-5).

The terrorist organization ISIS, consisting mostly of Sunni extremists, has founded an Islamic Caliphate in the Middle eastern area. The organization has succeeded in occupying large areas from Syria and Iraq, and fighters from all over the world, also from Finland, have joined its army. It displays most horrible cruelty and terror in the areas it has occupied. They take hostages hoping to get ransom; people, even women and children, are cruelly murdered; women are raped and sold as sex slaves and wives to Muslims. It is estimated that over half a million people have died in those atrocities.

Now the troupes of the US, Russia, Turkey, Iraq, etc, are trying to wipe out this terrorist organization and the extreme Muslim Caliphate. Besides the West, also moderate Muslim countries are concerned about the attacks of extreme Muslim militants, whose targets they too have been.

In these events in the Middle east, and in the whole world, comes true also the prophecy of the prophet Joel according to which the moon will be turned to blood before the dreadful judgements of the Day of the Lord on all the earth (Joel 2:30-32, Rev.6:12-17).

On the peninsula of Arabia in the neighbourhood of Mecca and Medina the moon was worshipped before the time of Islam and Muhammed. The symbol of moon was transferred to the religion of Islam, born in the 7th century, so that the crescent moon, or half moon, became the emblem seen in the flags and coats of arms of many Islamic countries. The Islam moon has turned to blood in this

end time, as the extreme Muslim militants strike with terror in the Middle east and also in Europe and the US. France, Germany, the UK, Russia, Sweden, and Turkey have been victims of these attacks of “the bloody moon”.

This chaos has caused an unprecedented refugee problem. Several millions of people live as refugees inside Syria and in the refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, etc., and the flood of refugees from Middle east and northern Africa has reached Europe and Finland, too. In the middle of all this agitation Israel has so far remained more or less untouched by it, but the threat of war is always lurking. Particularly Iran (Persia) keeps on threatening to wipe out Israel (Dan.10:13,14, 20,21). But the Holy One of Israel will take care of His own people, and the enemies of Israel will perish if they try to destroy this apple of God’s eye (Zec.2:6-8; Isa.54:15-17; Obad.12-21).

The River Euphrates and the Coming of the Messiah

“The sixth one poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water dried up, in order to prepare the way for the kings from the east. And I saw three unclean spirits that looked like frogs; they came from the mouth of the dragon, from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet. They are miracle-working demonic spirits which go out to the kings of the whole inhabited world to assemble them for the War of the Great Day of Adonai Tzevaot. (“Look! I am coming like a thief! How blessed are those who stay alert and keep their clothes clean, so that they won’t be walking naked and be publicly put to shame!”) And they gathered the kings to the place which in Hebrew is called Har Megiddo [Armageddon]” (Rev. 16:12-16, D.Stern).

The seals, trumpets and bowls of wrath mentioned in Revelation are not sudden events as a who-

le, but processes with a moment of beginning, a determined time of development and a culminating point. This also relates to the prophetic events at the river Euphrates as regards the sixth trumpet and the sixth bowl of wrath. When the events at the river Euphrates are displayed in front of our eyes, we’ll know that the coming of the Messiah is near.

When the antichristian troupes and the troupes of the kings of the East are being gathered and mobilized for the great war, the so called war of Armageddon, we have to be alert and keep watch because the coming of Yeshua the Messiah and the taking up, or resurrection, of the church is near.

When the Messiah comes like a thief in the night, those dead in the Messiah are resurrected and those alive in faith will have a glorified body in a split second, and will be caught together with the resurrected up in the air to meet the Lord (Matt.24:42-51; 1 Thes.4:13-18; 1 Cor.15:35-55; Phil.3:20,21). We have to take care that we keep watch and that our “clothes” are cleansed with Yeshua’s precious blood of atonement and washed with the pure water of God’s word (Rev.7:9-17; Eph.5:25-27).

If we have not yet come to faith and belong to Yeshua the Messiah, we must ask God to forgive us our sins, and surrender our lives to the hands of Yeshua the Messiah, in order to be ready when He comes to take His church away from the time of great tribulation and away from the global atom war and the judgements of God’s wrath (Isa.13:9-13; Dan.12:1-3; Matt.24:3, 20-31; John 14:1-6; 1 Thes.1:10).

In all and in all times we may rely on the grace and mercy of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and the care of the good God.

Anna's Legacy

Anna Hänninen



"We are all in different parts of the world working in our own places for the glory of the Lord and for the coming of His Kingdom. We are here only a while, but God has eternal plan for our lives. I believe that the purpose of our life is to come to know His plan for ourselves and to live it out with Him till it will open its final perfect beauty when we will leave behind us this earth."

Anna Hänninen 19.9.1926 - 11.3.2017

"The purpose of my writing is briefly to tell, how the Lord called me to pray and how He has led and guided me in my prayer life after it. If this can be spurring and encouraging you who are also called in the same way or feel the Lord to call you and hesitate to respond positively, so my hope has been fulfilled.

The Lord was calling me on the night between 17-18.7.1998. I woke up that night to the knowledge that the Lord was very close and that He would have something important to tell me. When I felt His closeness my tears began to roll down and I was able to say just, "Lord! You know everything what has been, but You also know it that You are dear to me and I'm ready to do Your will whatever it then will be." I felt in that moment within me His voice that was saying, "Your place is to be in the prayer chamber. You will be much alone, but I will always

be with you."

I was very blessed and spiritually inspired of it that the Lord had so confirmed me the direction of my future path. After that when Dr. Clifford Denton in August year 1997 for the first time visited on a ministry tour in Finland and when it also was a meeting in our home, I had already through him received for prayer targets some Asian countries and Malawi from Africa and other prayer targets relating to his ministry. Besides the above ones The Lord joint also to my primary prayers Israel (that had been already tens of years also before it in my prayers) through dreams. Especially there was a dream of Israel during the tribulation of Jacob.

Second dream was of the suffering body of Yeshua in prisons and third one was of the fate of millions of suffering children on the streets and slave labour of children and in other terrible pla-

ces.

I wanted that I have a disciplined daily schedule for the prayers and intercessory prayers. For a few years I prayed for four hours a day regularly. I had been advised to keep Sabbath free of this and to use it to personal recreation and rest and I experienced that it was a piece of good advice.

Later I started to pray three hours a day and during the last year of my prayers have become more the life style and not a kind of "performance" that I do in a set time. Nowadays several shorter times are included in my days when I specially go before the Lord in intercessory prayer, but also in between in the midst of daily chores the intercessory prayer targets are before my inner eyes and in prayer.

I think that as much as I can identify with the person or wider intercessory prayer target, so much I can share the loads, battles and experience the attacks of the enemy and share the joys of victories. If we can touch in prayer God's heart, we don't fail. I think also that if God has called to the intercessory prayer ministry, so it is call for the time of whole life and one can't disengage oneself of it according to one's own feelings and will. For me it is new fresh commitment every morning when I wake up and praise the Lord for His love and tell Him that I love Him and want to be faithful to Him.

As I'm in general alone at home on the five weekdays of the week, so the human sense of loneliness is sometimes even harrowing. So it was particularly in the beginning, as I had lived my whole

life from under 20 year old in the midst of a congregation actively and our home was always full of guests from far and wide. When the Lord then led to new kind of stage in this regard, so in the beginning the pain of loneliness was so great that I threw myself down on the sofa and cried out aloud this agony of mine to the Lord. Now I have every day before my eyes the big family of the Lord from different parts of the world. The pictures of everybody whose pictures I have had possibility to get and for whom I pray are fixed on two quite big boards and if I don't have a picture, so I have names on the board or paper. This way those who are far away come close and I can besides "be travelling" in the spirit from one continent to another to meet them daily.

Another point of contact especially concerning countries and people I have through it that I have asked friends to bring of these countries to me a little stone. When I pray for certain people, country or continent, I can take a stone taken from its ground to my hand and lift it up to the Lord..

Especially I'm always touched by a beautiful stone from the shore of Wales smoothed by the waves of the sea. It reminds me of the revival of Wales which influences are still known not only in England, but in different parts of the world. The smoothed stone is also a symbolic picture of it how we in the big family of the Lord are sharpening one another 'till the edges in us don't anymore hurt our brothers or sisters.

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”...that all of them may be one (echad)...” John 17:21

Chief editor and layout: Markus Nurmesniemi

Writers: Keijo Lindeman (Finland), Dr Clifford Denton (England), Paul Sumner (United States), Markus Nurmesniemi (Finland). Also other writers in this topic will be presented.

Translators: Pirjo Pulli, Markus Nurmesniemi

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Contact info: jovel.toimitus@gmail.com (e-mail), Mänttä, Finland

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