

# mishpacha beit midrash

## *Part Two of Five Introductory Articles*

*From*

### *Mishpachah Beit Midrash*

(The Family House of Study)

These five articles were written to prepare you to study the Torah—the first five books of the Scriptures. The Torah study of Mishpachah Beit Midrash is based on the following premise. The Torah, given by Adonai to Moses, is the foundation for all subsequent revelation from the prophets. Therefore, it is our goal to understand the Torah’s prophetic message. Through understanding the Torah, we build the proper foundation for understanding the rest of the Tanakh, and the New Covenant Scriptures. Furthermore, our Torah foundation will lead us to...

#### **The Goal of the Torah...**

### *The Revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach*

I invite you to study the Parashat HaShavuah (Weekly Torah Portion) with Mishpachah Beit Midrash as we use Thematic Analysis to understand the Torah, its prophetic message for all ages and the revelation of Yeshua the Messiah.

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## Part Two of Five Introductory Articles

# *Why Should We Study the Torah?*

## Part I

### A Question of Foundation

Before attempting to answer the question posed by the title of this article, I would like to introduce some definitions. I mention these definitions to ensure a common understanding.

- Tanakh—What most non-Jewish believers know as the "Old Testament." In Hebrew, the consonants in the word Tanakh actually form an acronym. The Tanakh is divided into what is called the Torah, Prophets (Nevi'im), and Writings (Khetuvim); hence, T-N-Kh.
- Old Covenant—In general, I use the words *Old or New Covenant* instead of *Old or New Testament*. The concept of the Bible being composed of an Old and New Testament is somewhat ambiguous because a testament is a will, which is a document of unilateral declaration. Covenants, which are what the Scriptures emphasize, concern agreements between two parties, specifically God and man. Jerome introduced the idea of an Old and New Testament when he produced his Latin translation of the Scriptures known as the Vulgate.
- The Law (Torah)—The Hebrew word *Torah* literally means ***teaching, instructions or doctrine***, not law. The Septuagint rendered it using the Greek word "nomos," (SEC #3551) which actually means, "law". The original Greek meaning of the word nomos did not mean Yahweh's Torah. It simply meant law—as in a decree, human legislation, etc. Therefore, Scriptural context determines whether or not nomos should be translated law, in the sense of a human ordinance, or Torah as in the sense of Adonai's Torah. The following are sometimes taken as synonymous; the Law, Tanakh, Torah, the Law of Moshe (Moses).
- The Pentateuch--The first five books of the Bible authored by Moses. In its most limited usage, the Torah is the Pentateuch (Chumash in Hebrew). In this article I use Torah to mean the first five books of Moses. I use the word Tanakh to mean the entirety of the "Old Testament" with special significance given to the first five books of Moses.

Unlike most non-Messianic Jewish believers in the God of Israel, who only accept the inspiration of the Tanakh (Old Testament), almost every non-Jewish believer in the God of Israel agrees that the entire Bible (Old and New Covenants) is the inspired Word of God. Traditionally, Jewish people have studied the Torah as the basis for learning the rest of the Tanakh. They recognize that the Torah of Moses is set apart, unique and the primary revelation given to man by God. In comparison, non-Jewish believers—both Messianic and Christian—will also agree that the Tanakh is inspired by Adonai. However, instead of revering the Torah as the foundation and basis for learning the rest of the Tanakh (and the New Covenant Scriptures), *many* Messianic believers and *most* Christian ***believers only use the "New Testament" Scriptures as the foundation for their faith***. Note, I did not say that they didn't study the Tanakh, or that they

didn't think it was important. I'm simply making a general statement that will almost always be true. Non-Jewish believers rarely use the Torah as **THE** foundation upon which to build their faith. For example, how many Churches would take a newly converted sinner and begin to disciple him about sin, repentance from dead works, faith, the born-again experience, etc. from the Torah? See my point?

Although most believers would *mentally* agree that the Torah is the foundation for understanding the rest of the Tanakh and the New Covenant Scriptures, *few hardly ever build the foundation of their faith on the Torah*, which is the only true Scriptural source for a foundation. As with most non-Jewish believers who were saved and discipled in the traditional Church institution, the foundation of my faith was established using only the New Covenant Scriptures. Although the New Covenant Scriptures are God-breathed, *they were never intended to be used to form the foundation of our faith*. The Torah alone should be the starting point for building the foundation of our most holy faith.

I'm not saying that the rest of the Tanakh and the New Covenant Scriptures aren't needed. I am saying that each has its own function and that each should be used appropriately. The Torah is the foundational revelation about the nature of God and His redemptive dealings with mankind; however, it is not a *clear* revelation of those subjects. The Tanakh contained many mysteries. The answers to those mysteries were not revealed until the coming of the Messiah. The New Covenant Scriptures are a continuation of the Torah in that they complete (fill up) the revelation of the Tanakh. How so? We must remember the Torah was a **shadow and pattern** of good things to come. Therefore, it is impossible to fully understand and properly interpret the Torah apart from the New Covenant Scriptures. This is not to imply that the Torah cannot be understood at all. All concepts and doctrines developed in the New Covenant Scriptures are already revealed in the Torah, *albeit only as a shadow*. For example, the Torah goes into great detail to explain the significance of substitutionary blood atonement by using the Levitical sacrificial system as a teaching tool. However, it is not until reading the Renewed Covenant Scriptures that we understand that the fullest manifestation of substitutionary blood atonement is found in the sacrifice of Yeshua, the sinless Son of God. In a similar manner, the New Covenant Scriptures alone should not and cannot form the foundation of our faith. The foundation of our faith must be the Torah. Why? Because, Adonai gave us the Torah first. It sets the standard for all subsequent prophecy. Furthermore, its interpretation is rooted in Hebraic thinking processes and principles. These Hebraic thinking processes and principles must be used in order to properly interpret the Torah. Furthermore, these same Hebraic thinking processes and principles will help us better interpret the New Covenant Scriptures. For example, it is the Torah, specifically the book of Leviticus and the commandments regarding the festival of Passover, which give meaning to John the Baptist's statement concerning Yeshua being the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Without the Torah what would that statement have meant? The rest of the Tanakh and the entirety of the New Covenant Scriptures find their foundation, authority and significance through the words of Moses recorded in the Torah. Thus, the Torah is preeminent.

If you are reading this article and your faith isn't based upon the foundation of the Torah, then you need to seriously consider studying the Torah diligently to see what it says for yourself. If your foundation is built predominantly upon Scriptures from the New Covenant alone, then you

will have a *less than ideal understanding* of Adonai's Scriptures and His will for your life. This less than ideal understanding will exist because you will lack the proper foundational understanding (from the Torah) to interpret the rest of the Tanakh and New Covenant Scriptures properly.

By way of a practical example, if you plan to build a house with a walk-out basement, you will need a set of blue prints that clearly plan for a walk-out basement as your foundation. You could not use plans where the foundation is based upon a three foot crawl space. If you do, your walk-out basement will never see the light of day. So likewise, believers who use the New Covenant Scriptures as the foundation of their faith have used the wrong foundation to build upon. The lack of a Torah-based foundation leads many non-Jewish believers to misunderstand the Torah *and* the New Covenant. It is this lack of a Torah-based foundation that has led non-Jewish believers (whether Messianic or Christian) to think that 1) the Church has replaced Israel as the people of God, 2) the Torah was abolished when Yeshua was executed, 3) there will be a pre-trib rapture for the Church while the Jews get kicked around some more by the anti-Messiah, 4) the Torah was only given to the Jews, 5) the Sabbath was annulled, 6) we no longer need to observe dietary instructions, 7) the Scriptural Holy Days of Leviticus 23 are no longer valid expressions of worship, as well as many other Scripturally foreign doctrines.

Earlier I stated that the Torah couldn't be fully understood without the illumination of the New Covenant Scriptures because the Tanakh was only a shadow of good things to come. Now we see that the reverse is true also. It will be impossible to fully comprehend the New Covenant Scriptures without a proper foundation from the Torah. They are two witnesses that go hand in hand, but each in its proper order. The Torah as a foundation first, then the remainder of the Tanakh, then the New Covenant Scriptures.

## **Part II**

### **The New Covenant Always Points Us to the Torah as its Source**

During this second portion, I will endeavor to show that *the basis of everything in the New Covenant Scriptures is clearly founded in the Torah*. The idea that 1) the Torah was for the Jews, 2) the Torah ended with the death of Yeshua and 3) Yeshua started the Church as something separate from and subsequent to the Jewish nation based upon "New Testament" Scriptures instead of or subsequent to the Torah is totally foreign to the Scriptures. Now I would like to demonstrate to you why you should study the Torah by showing you that the only Scripturally correct foundation for your faith is one based upon the Torah. I want to do this by making a number of bold assertions. Then I will show you how Scripture supports those bold assertions. Hopefully, in the end you will understand why you should study the Torah.

#### ***Bold Assertion #1***

The primary goal of every single word of the Torah is to reveal to us the person/work of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God. Therefore, we should study the Torah so that we can properly understand the person/work of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God.

This is the conclusion Paul reaches in the book of Romans:

<sup>4</sup>*For Christ is the goal of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.* (Romans 10:4)

Another example teaching this truth is Luke's account of Yeshua's words to the two disciples traveling on the road to Emmaeus:

<sup>27</sup>*And beginning at **Moses and all the Prophets**, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures **the things concerning Himself**...*<sup>44</sup> *Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.**"*<sup>45</sup> *And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.* (Luke 24:27, 44-45, emphasis mine)

We are told that Yeshua taught them concerning *Himself* from the Torah (Law of Moses), the prophets and the Psalms (writings). The fact that He used the Torah to teach about Himself is amazing when you consider that *the Torah of Moses (first five books) never even mentions the word Messiah!* Yeshua made similar statements in John 5:

<sup>46</sup>*For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for **he wrote about Me.*** (John 5:46, emphasis mine)

<sup>39</sup>*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; **and these are they which testify of Me.*** (John 5:39, emphasis mine)

Here Yeshua boldly states that the Torah of Moses was written to inform us about Him! His statement is consistent with Psalm 40, which states that the Scriptures are written about the Messiah:

<sup>6</sup>*Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.* <sup>7</sup>*Then I said, "Behold, I come; **In the scroll of the book it is written of me.**"* <sup>8</sup>*I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart."* (Psalm 40:6-8, emphasis mine)

Here are some valid questions one may ask to refute bold assertion #1.

- Does the story of creation teach about the person/work of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God?
- Do the "boring" genealogies teach about the person/work of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God?
- Do the little "kiddy" stories about Noah's ark, Jonah and the big fish, and the three Hebrew children teach about the person/work of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God?
- Do the seemingly endless stories about life and death, war and famine teach about the person/work of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God?

The answer to all of the above is an emphatic yes! The reason many of us don't see Messiah in genealogies and "kiddy stories" is because we haven't been trained how to view the Scriptures Hebraically. Apart from reading it in the New Covenant Scriptures, how many of us would have figured out (on our own) that when Moses lifted the serpent in the wilderness it was a picture of the work of the Messiah? Be honest. I used to wonder, how is the average reader of the Bible supposed to figure out something like that? Well, once you've been trained to think Hebraically you'll see pictures of the work of Messiah literally everywhere in the Torah. Do you know how Samson's life and death is a picture of the work of Messiah? I know there's nothing in the New Covenant Scriptures that specifically states that an aspect of Samson's life was Messianic in significance; however, a certain aspect of His life and death is clearly just as Messianic as was the instance of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Bold Assertion #2***

None of the Apostles preached a "New Testament" gospel. They preached ***THE GOSPEL***, which has its roots in the Torah.

Unlike the Gospel preached nowadays, the Apostles didn't have a "New Testament" set of Scriptures from which they preached. They always appealed to the Torah to substantiate everything they preached. The concept of studying a body of Scriptures called the "New Testament" and then using them as the primary source of doctrine was (and should be) unheard of. How do I know this to be true? Because what we call the "New Testament" Scriptures didn't exist as a canon of Scriptures during the time period of the book of Acts, which records the establishment of the congregation in Jerusalem and other congregations around the world. Furthermore, Paul clearly pointed to the Torah as his source for the gospel:

*<sup>1</sup> Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God<sup>2</sup> which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures... (Romans 1:1-2, emphasis mine)*

Here Paul tells us that the Gospel was promised in the Torah. Furthermore, Hebrews 4 tells us that the gospel was preached to the children of Israel in the wilderness! The context shows us that the gospel preached in the wilderness was the same Gospel the readers of Hebrews had heard.

*<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. <sup>2</sup>For indeed **the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.** (Hebrews 4:1-2, emphasis mine)*

In the book of Acts, James states that the non-Jewish believers were suppose to learn the Torah as they attended synagogue on the Shabbat.

*<sup>19</sup>Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, <sup>20</sup>but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. <sup>21</sup>For Moses has had*

*throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." (Acts 15:19-21, emphasis mine)*

At this point I'm sure some of my readers will disagree with my last statement. Before coming to a conclusion, please consider the following. Although Paul is called the apostle to the Gentiles, we must *be careful not to think that he established Gentile Churches* that met separately (on Sunday) from the Messianic Jewish believers of the synagogue. Throughout the book of Acts we see that Paul's custom was to evangelize within the synagogue.<sup>2</sup> At that time there were many Gentiles, known as God-fearers or proselytes at the gate<sup>3</sup>, who met regularly within traditional Judaism throughout the world. They were the primary source of Gentile converts for Paul during his missionary journeys.<sup>4</sup> Evangelization apart from the synagogue was the exception not the rule (Acts 17:18-34). Thus, Paul, uniquely equipped to evangelize Gentiles, ministered mainly to those who would be most open to the gospel—***Gentiles already meeting in the synagogue***. Paul did not have the Gentile believers leave the synagogue and form "Churches." They continued to meet in synagogues (except when persecution prevented them) as one body in Messiah. This view is in total harmony with the Pauline epistles where Paul sometimes appealed to the Jewish believers (Romans 2:17-29; 7:1) while at other times he appealed to the non-Jewish believers (Romans 11:13). In the book of Acts, we learn that Paul established congregations from Jewish and non-Jewish people who were already actively participating in the traditional synagogue. Furthermore, they were believers who related to each other in Torah-based communities as one body in Messiah (Acts 15:13-21; Ephesians 2:1 – 3:21). Now we can truly understand that James indeed intended for the non-Jewish believers to study ***Torah*** as they attended ***synagogue*** on the ***Sabbath***. That's the *only* pattern that can be gleaned from Scripture.

### **Bold Assertion #3**

Paul never used "New Testament" Scriptures to persuade anyone about Yeshua's identity as the Messiah. He only used the Scriptures available to him, The Tanakh.

The pattern established in the book of Acts teaches us that those who preached the gospel and those to whom the gospel was preached, looked to the Torah as the final authority concerning the veracity of the message of the gospel.

<sup>23</sup>*So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he **explained and solemnly testified** of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning **Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets**, from morning till evening. (Acts 28:23, emphasis mine)*

This fact is also confirmed when we examine what happened in Berea:

<sup>10</sup> *Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, **they went into the synagogue of the Jews**.* <sup>11</sup> *These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, **and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*** <sup>12</sup> *Therefore many of them*

*believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. (Acts 17:10-12, emphasis mine)*

Why did the Berean Jews (and the Gentiles who met with them in the synagogue, Acts 17:10-12) believe? Because, ***Paul's message was substantiated by the Torah!*** Could you imagine Paul going into a traditional synagogue preaching from a “New Testament”? The Jews wouldn't have let him enter the synagogue. Could you imagine significant numbers of conversions in orthodox synagogues today as a result of Christians preaching the gospel from the New Covenant Scriptures? It's laughable. There are reasons why Jewish people don't believe Yeshua is the Messiah and it has nothing to do with their inability to interpret Scripture. They know the only true basis for judging whether or not someone is the Messiah is dependent on the Torah. If we follow Paul's pattern, we will 1) understand how to preach Messiah and the Kingdom of God from the Torah, 2) be able to effectively present the Messiah to a Jewish person and 3) we will have the proper foundation to be able to understand the New Covenant Scriptures.

### ***Bold Assertion #4***

Paul established and maintained congregations using the Torah as his source for the proper foundation.

*<sup>19</sup> Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup>having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone . . . (Ephesians 2:19-20, emphasis mine)*

As a master builder, Paul knew how to properly build a house with the appropriate foundation. Eph 2:19-20 states that the foundation consisted of instruction from three sources—the apostles, prophets and Yeshua. By prophets, he means the testimony of all the prophets of the past, preserved in the Tanakh. By apostles, he meant the testimony of the apostles who were eyewitnesses of Yeshua's life—preserved for us in the gospel accounts. When he states that Yeshua is the chief cornerstone, he means that Yeshua's life is the starting point. Where do we first learn about the Messiah? From the Torah of course. To supplement the Torah foundation we also have the testimony of the prophets and apostles.

### ***Bold Assertion #5***

The apostles counted the testimony of the Torah as stronger evidence for the Messiahship of Yeshua than their own eyewitness testimony!

The apostle Peter gives us a dramatic example of how strongly they looked to the Torah.

*<sup>16</sup>We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup>For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."<sup>[U]</sup>  
<sup>18</sup>We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the*



*sacred mountain.* <sup>19</sup>*And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to **pay attention to it**, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.* <sup>20</sup>*Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.* <sup>21</sup>*For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.* (II Peter 1:16-21, emphasis mine)

Peter stated that he was an eyewitness to the Messiah's majesty. He goes on to say that because he witnessed the Messiah's glory, he could give testimony that the words of the prophets were true. He says the words of the prophets are "made more certain" because he had witnessed their fulfillment. But then note what he says. Does he state that we should look to and trust in his eyewitness account? Does he say to believe what he is writing as if it is the final authority? No! He said we need to **"pay attention" to the words of the prophets**. Do you see the importance of what I've just stated? Although Peter is an eyewitness to the power of the coming of the Messiah, he is stated that we should pay attention to the words of the prophets! Why didn't he state that we should just believe his experience as an eyewitness? It's because he was faithful to point us to the true foundation of our faith—the words of the prophets preserved in the Tanakh.

### ***Bold Assertion #6***

The prophets of the Torah have more to say about our future [I'm writing this in December 2002] than the writers of the New Covenant Scriptures.

Peter preached that Yeshua would be in heaven "until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began," Since Yeshua is still in heaven we know that we are in that period of restoration. Furthermore, Peter says that all those things that need to be restored have already been prophesied by the prophets, beginning with Moses!

*<sup>19</sup>Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, <sup>20</sup>and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, <sup>21</sup>whom heaven must **receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.** <sup>22</sup>For Moses truly said to the fathers, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. <sup>23</sup>And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' <sup>24</sup>Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days.* (Acts 3:19-24, emphasis mine)

Yeshua, as well as every apostle, appealed to the Torah as the basis of their preaching and teaching concerning the last days. Most of the book of Revelation, from the four horsemen (compare Zechariah 6:1-8 with Revelation 6:1-11), to the anti-Messiah (compare Daniel 7-11 with Revelation 13), to mystery Babylon (compare Jeremiah 51 with Revelation 17) was already recorded in the Torah! I recently heard from a reliable source that a non-Messianic Jewish Rabbi by the name of Terry Cook—who had thoroughly examined the New Covenant Scriptures—

presented seminars entitled *What Jews Think About Jesus*. During one seminar he was asked, "What do you think about the book of Revelation?" His reply was, "It's a stolen book...everything in it was taken from the prophets of Israel." Is that not profound? A Jewish Rabbi who doesn't believe that Yeshua is Israel's Messiah, yet has thoroughly examined the New Covenant Scriptures believes the book of Revelation is a stolen book? Why did he believe that? Because he was also thoroughly acquainted with the Tanakh and as he read the book of Revelation he saw how much of that book had been taken from the Tanakh. He found so much in Revelation from the Tanakh that it caused him to exclaim it was a stolen book.

### ***The Assertion of All Assertions***

As a believer in the one and only true God of Israel and in the work of His Messiah Yeshua, you should *reject any doctrine that cannot clearly be supported by the Tanakh*. You should *only believe doctrines that can be fully substantiated by the Tanakh*. Lastly, the Torah alone should be the foundation you build upon.

If you thoroughly examine the Scripture references used to support my bold assertions, you will notice one common theme. ***THE WRITERS OF THE NEW COVENANT SCRIPTURES ALWAYS POINT THEIR LISTENERS TO THE TORAH AS THE SOURCE OF THEIR TEACHING***. Yeshua also pointed to the Torah as the source of everything He said or did. They NEVER thought of the Torah as something that had been replaced by a new set of Scriptures. They never taught that Yeshua started something new or in any manner different from what the writers of the Tanakh had already taught. They simply taught Torah in the age of the Messiah. I can boldly state that those who disagree with the last premise simply have misunderstood certain aspects of the New Covenant because they did not have a Torah-based foundation.

Hopefully, you can see that the New Covenant writers (and Yeshua) ***ALWAYS*** pointed to the Torah as their source and foundation. Let me demonstrate how practical this understanding is. Could you prove from the Tanakh alone that we should no longer celebrate the Sabbath? Could you prove from the Tanakh alone that we should no longer obey its dietary commands? Could you prove from the Tanakh alone that it's okay to disregard the Scriptural Holy Days (Leviticus 23) and substitute the utterly pagan practices found in Easter and Christmas? Finally, could you prove from the Tanakh alone that there would be a pre-tribulation rapture Christians while the Jews are left on the earth to be slaughtered by the anti-Messiah? If you can't use the Tanakh alone and fully substantiate the doctrines I've posed to you then you shouldn't believe them. Why not? Because, by their own testimony, the writers of the New Covenant Scriptures unanimously and unwaveringly POINTED TO THE TORAH AS THE SOURCE OF THEIR DOCTRINE.

***Therefore, if the Torah doesn't teach a doctrine either explicitly or implicitly then it couldn't have been taught in the New Covenant Scriptures.***

As a final example let us look at Paul's advice to Timothy:

*15and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16All Scripture is given by*

*inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (II Timothy 3:15-16, emphasis mine)*

Here, Paul clearly states that the "Old Testament" Scriptures can make a New Covenant believer "wise for salvation," and that the same "Old Testament" Scriptures were to be the basis for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness (i.e., how to live a holy life).

***Although we know the New Covenant Scriptures are inspired, in context, Paul absolutely was not referring to what we know of as the New Covenant Scriptures in the verses above. He could only have been talking about the Tanakh because he stated in verse fifteen that Timothy had known the Scriptures since he was a child, a time period within which the New Covenant Scriptures didn't even exist!*** With this understanding let me paraphrase what he said:

1. All the Tanakh is inspired by God!
2. The source of your doctrines intended for New Covenant believers is supposed to be the Tanakh!
3. The basis for reproof/correction of New Covenant believers is the Tanakh!
4. The basis for training in righteousness of New Covenant believers is the Tanakh!
5. The Tanakh is the basis for making the New Covenant believer complete!
6. The Tanakh is the basis for thoroughly equipping the New Covenant believer for every good work!

In summary, I can state that the Tanakh presents all aspects of the person and ministry of the Messiah. His life, death, burial, resurrection, etc. are all taught in the Tanakh. The supernatural origins of His birth, the fact that He wasn't necessarily handsome man, the fact that His brothers hated him without a cause, the fact that the Father would send His only unique son, the fact that His death would bring victory over hasatan, sin and death are all truths taught in the Tanakh. *These are not new doctrines established by the New Covenant Scriptures!*

It may seem as if the New Covenant Scriptures introduce these truths; however, their source is actually the Tanakh. I think it would be fare to say that very few non-Jewish believers would be able to defend all aspects of their faith from the Tanakh. Why is this true? Because, to most non-Jewish believers the Tanakh is a mysterious document since it doesn't spell things out as clearly as the New Covenant Scriptures do. They don't understand how the Tanakh foreshadowed all the realities they see in the New Covenant. Therefore, they think the Tanakh is something separate from and different than the New Covenant.

*<sup>16</sup>So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, <sup>17</sup>which are a shadow of things to come, the substance is of Christ. (Colossians 2:16-17, emphasis mine)*

This verse clearly states that the Scriptural Holy Days are a shadow of the person and work of the Messiah. You can determine a few things about me from my shadow. You can tell I'm tall, thin, that I have short hair and long arms. However, there are *many* important details you cannot see from my shadow. You can't tell the color of my eyes, skin or hair. You don't know the sound of my voice or the fact that I have a short beard. The Tanakh is like a shadow. However,

when you actually see my body you will see many details my shadow couldn't reveal. When non-Jewish believers base the foundation of their faith upon the New Covenant Scriptures (to the neglect of the Tanakh) they tend to view the Tanakh's shadow of the Messiah as something different from the fullness of the New Covenant Scriptures' truth of Messiah. They don't understand that the Tanakh is trying to paint a black and white (and often cryptic) picture of the Messiah and His work of redemption. This was done so that Adonai could reveal the fullness of His plan at His appointed time (Ephesians 3:1-13). If you view the fullness of the Messiah in color—through the New Covenant Scriptures—it will be very easy for you to not understand and even reject the Messiah in His black and white shadow—from the Tanakh. This will be especially true ***if you don't have the black and white shadow as the foundation***. Furthermore, if you don't have the black and white shadow of the Messiah—the Tanakh—as your foundation, you will not truly understand the fullness of the Messiah as presented in the New Covenant Scriptures. Adonai gave us the Tanakh first, enabling us to learn about the person and work of the Messiah, so that when He was revealed we would know who He is. The lack of a Torah-based foundation is the greatest reason why the New Covenant Scriptures have been largely misinterpreted by the Church.

Hopefully, you have been stimulated to study the Torah for the right reason. I pray that Adonai will continue to open eyes to His restoration of truth in these last days. Part of the restoration involves restoring the Torah as the foundation for all disciples of the Messiah. Knowing that the New Covenant writers only taught the Torah, it behooves us to study it, learn it, know it and make it our foundation. Truly, we should not believe anything unless it has its foundation in the Torah of Life!

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<sup>1</sup> You'll have to study the weekly Torah teachings to find out how 😊 .

<sup>2</sup> Acts 13:5,14, 42, 44; 14:1; 17:1-2, 10, 17; 18:4, 8, 19; 19:8.

<sup>3</sup> David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc., 1992, p 257.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 13:42-44; 14:1; 17:4, 12; 18:4; 19:10.