

Lesson 5

Jesus, the Fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets

Group Icebreakers:

Ask the group the following questions.

- Name some of the various types of law. (Laws of nature, principles, parental, governmental, and God's laws)
- Who makes the laws? (Those who are in authority)
- Why do you think we have laws? (To establish boundaries, provide guidelines, social acceptance, safety of citizens, and promote godliness)
- Have you ever broken a law and if so what was the outcome?
- Why are there consequences to breaking laws? (To punish or to discipline inappropriate behavior)

Introduction:

Most people are not raised in the Jewish faith. To understand what Jesus is talking about and how the disciples heard Him requires some background information. Jesus introduces His next subject in the Sermon on Mount by talking about the Law and the Prophets. Let's begin there.

The Bible as we know it today contains sixty-six books which are divided into two parts. The two parts are known as the Old and New Testaments. The New Testament consists of twenty-seven books. It was developed from a collection of various writings occurring within the seventy-year period after Jesus' death. In 397 AD, the Council of Carthage approved the New Testament as Scripture.

The Old Testament consists of thirty-nine books. It was developed from a collection of various writings occurring within an eleven hundred-year period beginning with Moses. These thirty-nine books were the Scriptures at the time of Jesus. When any New Testament writer speaks of Scripture he is referring to only to the Old Testament.

Jews divide the Scriptures into three parts. The Scriptures are called the **TaNaKh**, which is an acronym formed from the first letters of the three parts.

1. **T**orah is the first part and means "The Law" or "Teaching". The Torah consists of the Five Books of Moses or Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy).
2. **N**'vi'im is the second part and means "The Prophets". This part contains the Historical Books (Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings), the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) and the Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi).
3. **K**'tuvim is the third division and means "The Writings". Included in The Writings are the Five Scrolls (Ecclesiastes, Ruth, Esther, Song of Songs, and Lamentations) and the Other Writings (1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Daniel).

The Torah¹ ("The Law" or "Teaching") contains six hundred thirteen laws. There are three hundred sixty-five negative ones. According to Jewish rabbis these supposedly correspond to the

¹ **The Torah.** See article on page 8 ("[Torah' Defined](#)") for a full explanation.

number of veins in the body or days in a year. There are two hundred forty-eight positive laws, which correspond to the number of bones in the body. The purpose of bones is to provide structure for the body. The veins carry blood and “*life is in the blood.*” Together God’s laws provide life and structure for the body or the way a person should live daily or 365 days a year. These laws fall into two broad categories: ceremonial (laws towards God) and civil (laws towards one another). The Ten Commandments summarize all these laws and are found in Exodus 20:1-17.

When Moses descended from Mount Sinai he delivered The Ten Commandments written on two tablets of stone. Five commandments were written on each tablet. **(See two tablet layout at the end of this lesson)** The first five laws deal with man’s relationship to God and the second five with man’s relationship to one another. Each set of five is listed in descending order from the greatest to the least. The idea being that if a person broke the least of the commandments he was on a path that would lead to the breaking of the greatest commandment.

In the first set of five, the fifth commandment is “Honor your father and mother.” If a person breaks that commandment it leads to breaking the first commandment, “You shall have no other gods before Me.” The thought goes like this. If a person will not honor his parents whom God has placed over him, then he will not honor God either because he is self-willed and consider himself to be god.

In the second set of five, the tenth commandment is “You shall not covet anything that belongs to another”. If a person breaks that commandment it leads to breaking the sixth commandment, “You shall not murder”. The thought goes like this. When a person covets he will stop at nothing to get it. A current example of this concept would be a bank robber, who kills someone during a holdup. He starts by coveting something that is not his, and then steals what he wants and finally winds up murdering someone to get it.

The Ten Commandments can be further summarized by just two commandments. When Jesus was confronted with the question as to which was the great commandment in the Law, Jesus replied by quoting two Scriptures: Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. “*And He said to him, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.*”

Reading the Scripture:

Jesus, the Fulfillment of the Law and Prophets

The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5:17-20

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

Do not think that I came to abolish **the Law or the Prophets**²; I did not come to **abolish**,³ but

² **the Law or the Prophets** – Jesus was referring to everything that His Father had established (the Law) and everything that His Father wanted brought to pass (the Prophets). The Law simply defined is the *teaching and instruction* of G-d, but more than a divinely ordained behavior pattern for life on earth: it also describes G-d’s own “behavior pattern,” the manner in which He chooses to relate to His creation. When we order our lives after Torah’s directives, we are not only fulfilling G-d’s will – we are also emulating His “behavior,” translating the divine relationship with creation into human/physical terms. In the words of the *rabbis*, “G-d’s manner is not like the manner of flesh and blood. The manner of flesh and blood is that he instructs others to do, but does not do

to **fulfill**.⁴ For truly I say to you, **until heaven and earth pass away**,⁵ not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. Whoever then **annuls**⁶ one of the least of these **commandments**,⁷ and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever **keeps**⁸ and teaches them, he shall be called great in the

himself; G-d, however, what He Himself does, that is what He tells *his people* to do and observe,” (chabad.org/media/pdf/17098.pdf); (i.e. 1 John 2:3-6, “And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”).

³ **Abolish** – (*I did not*) loosen thoroughly, (*I did not*) break up, (*I did not*) overthrow, (*I did not*) destroy (both literally and metaphorically), (*I did not*) unyoke, unharness a carriage horse or pack animal. Nor did I metaphorically **overthrow, render vain, deprive of success, bring to naught** God’s institutions, forms of government, laws. (*Synonyms: deprive of force, annul, abrogate, discard.*) – (<https://biblehub.com/greek/2647.htm>).

⁴ **Fulfill** – to be obeyed (*walked out*) as it should be (<https://biblehub.com/greek/4137.htm>); (i.e. Matthew 3:13-15, “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ ¹⁵But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he consented.”) i.e. Ezekiel 36:25-27, “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And **I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules,**” and Galatians 5:25, “*If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.*”).

⁵ **until heaven and earth pass away** – The sign of the end of the age is when “heaven and earth pass away” at the great white throne judgment. According to the book of Revelation this does not occur until after the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth – Rev 20:11-21:1 (i.e. Matthew 25:35-36, “**Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.**”). For greater in-depth study on this subject, see Lesson 46 in book three, “*Building the Temple*” of this Journey with Jesus book series.

⁶ **Annul (abrogate, relaxes)** – declare invalid (an official agreement, decision, or result), to “loosen” (literally or figuratively). (*Synonyms: subvert (undermine the power and authority of (an established system or institution) – (<https://biblehub.com/greek/3089.htm>); (i.e. declare (a marriage) to have had no legal existence.). (Abrogate) repeal or do away with (a law, right, or formal agreement) or evade (a responsibility or duty). (Synonyms: repudiate, revoke, repeal, rescind, overturn, overrule, override, do away with, annul, break off, invalidate, nullify, void, negate, dissolve, veto, declare null and void, discontinue) – (<https://www.bing.com/search?q=abrogate+meaning>); (i.e. Romans 3:31, “*Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.*” Romans 2:12, “. . . all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law,” Romans 2:13, “*For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.*”).*

⁷ **Parallel Biblical Law definitions** – i.e. Matthew 28:20, “teaching them to **observe** all the **I have commanded** you,” **observe**: I keep, guard, observe, keep watch over, continue keeping guard over, preserve – (<https://biblehub.com/greek/5083.htm>); and **I have commanded**: to order, command to be done, enjoin (to direct or impose by authoritative order or with urgent admonition (gentle or friendly reproof, counsel or warning against fault or oversight) – (<https://biblehub.com/greek/1781.htm>); i.e. Deuteronomy 30:11-20, “If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his **statutes** and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you,” **statutes**: (*in the words of the rabbis*) Divine law was first given to us encapsulated in the Ten Commandments, which were etched by the hand of G-d in two tablets of stone . . . When something is written, the substance of the letters that express it – the ink – remains a separate entity from the substance upon which they have been set – the parchment. On the other hand, letters engraved in stone are forged in it: the words are stone and the stone is words . . . By the same token, there is an aspect of Torah that is “inked” on our soul; we understand it, our emotions are roused by it; it becomes our “lifestyle” or even our “personality”; but it remains something additional to ourselves. But there is a dimension of Torah that is **statutes**, engrave in our being. There is a dimension of Torah which expresses a bond with G-d that is the very essence of a believer’s soul, (chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/2832/jewish/Reasoning-The-Stone.htm); (i.e. Exodus 31:18, Exodus 32:16, Jeremiah 31:33, 2 Corinthians 3:3-9).

⁸ **Keeps (does, to do)** – to make or do (I make, manufacture, construct; I do, act, cause.). (**To Do**) to follow some method in expressing by deeds the feelings and thoughts of the mind; universally, describing the mode of action: to act rightly, to do the law, meet its demands, (to do) the things which the law commands. (*Synonyms:*

kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your **righteousness**⁹ surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

The Command:

- ❖ Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

Group Discussion:

1. Many in the Church today are saying that Christians are no longer under law but grace. What do you understand this statement to mean?

The Lesson:

Jesus doesn't want His disciples to think that He is doing away with everything they have been taught in order to establish His own religion. He isn't doing that! But like parents towards their children, He wants them to gain in wisdom and understanding.

When Jesus spoke concerning the Law and the Prophets He was talking about more than just a few laws and prophecies. He was talking about the sum-total of all that was written in Scripture. Jesus was referring to everything that His father had established (the Law) and everything that His father wanted brought to pass (the Prophets). And Jesus declared that He alone would fulfill them!

After His resurrection from the dead, Jesus appeared to two of His disciples while they were on the road to Emmaus. *“And beginning with Moses (“Torah” or “The Law” or “Teaching”) and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures”*.¹⁰ No ordinary man could perfectly fulfill all that was written, only the one of whom the Scriptures testified, the Word of God, Himself, Jesus.

The gospel according to the Apostle John opens with this testimony of Jesus. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being”*.¹¹ John's words are pregnant with meaning, but difficult to comprehend. Let's try to get a grip on them.

Do you remember how the Bible starts? *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Do you remember how they were created? God spoke them into existence. By His word

abide, agree, appoint, be, bear, cause, commit without any delay, exercise, fulfil, gain, hold, keep, observe, perform, provide, purpose, secure, tarry, work, yield – (<https://biblehub.com/greek/4160.htm>).

⁹ **Righteousness** – properly, *judicial approval* (the *verdict* of approval); in the NT, *the approval* of God (“divine approval”); refers to *what is deemed right by the Lord* (after His examination), *i.e.* what is *approved in His eyes; the state of him who is such as he ought to be, righteousness; the condition acceptable to God; walking in the way of righteousness equivalent to an upright, righteous, man* – (<https://biblehub.com/greek/1343.htm>); (*i.e.* 2 Timothy 3:16, *“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”*); **to do righteousness, to live uprightly** (*i.e.* 1 John 2:29, *“If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him,”* 1 John 3:7, *“Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous,”* 1 John 3:10, *“By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother,”* 1 Peter 2:24, *“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.”*).

¹⁰ Luke 24:27

¹¹ John 1:1-3

everything came into existence. According to John, Jesus is God's Word. You might say that Jesus is the creative force behind every one of God's thoughts and plans. He brings things to pass! God created everything through His Son, the Word of God.

The Scriptures are the revealed ideas and plans of our Father in heaven; it is up to the Word of God to bring them to pass. For nothing was created apart from Him. We know the Word of God by the name He was given at birth, Jesus or Yashua or Joshua. The meaning of the name is "I Am Salvation" or "God's Salvation". The people of God were also to refer to the Word of God as Immanuel or "God With Us". However, the Word of God is more than just Jesus or Immanuel. He is the Son of God, the creator of all things and one with God, His Father. He is the expression of all that God is.

Since the Word of God and the Father are one, how can they be divided? They can't. The Word of God is always in harmony with the Father and can do nothing except His will. In John 4:34 Jesus tells His disciples, *"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work."*

This concept of oneness, unity and harmony was passed on to man as we were created in the image of God. And since we were created in His image, God does not want us to lie. A lie destroys harmony, unity and oneness. Jesus cautioned His disciples to do what they said they were going to do when He told them, *"Let your yes be yes, and your no be no"*.¹² When a person does not do what he says he is going to do it tarnishes the image of God. There is no oneness, unity or harmony in that person because His words are not in line with his actions.

As Jesus continues speaking He assures His disciples that the Law will not pass away until everything in it is fulfilled. All the commandments in The Law are spiritual, holy and good. Think of it this way, "Which of the laws are not good for people?" If the laws are good, then God, who is good and gave them, will not remove them.

Jesus goes on to say, *"Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."* Did you notice something interesting in His statement? A person can be in the kingdom of heaven and not keep the commandments and even teach others to do the same thing. The keeping or not keeping of the commandments is not the requirement of remaining in the kingdom of heaven. The observance of them only determines a person's stature within the kingdom of heaven.¹³

Jesus' next statement is a blockbuster! *"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.* Entrance into the kingdom of heaven cannot be gained by keeping the laws and commandments. Jesus said righteousness greater than that of the scribes and Pharisees, who tried to keep, each law perfectly, was required. What is this righteousness?

The Apostle Paul in Romans 4:3 and 9 answers the question. *"For what does the Scripture say? 'AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS*

¹² Matthew 5:37

¹³ Genesis 26:4-5, *"I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my states, and my laws."*

RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Abraham not only believed that God existed but in what God said.¹⁴ Abraham believed the Word of God. Jesus is the Word of God. Abraham trusted God and His Word, the Father and the Son. This trust, belief or confidence is called faith. *“Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness.”*

The Point of the Lesson:

Jesus Christ, fulfills all the requirements of the Law and the Prophets. An individual does not gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven by fulfilling those requirements, but by a belief in and dependence on Jesus Christ, the Word of God.

Application:

At the next group meeting report any occasion when you were motivated by love to do something for God or another.

The Ten Commandments

Tablet 1 - Love of God

1

“You shall have no other gods before Me.”

2

“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”

3

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.”

4

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”

5

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.”

Tablet 2 - Love of Neighbor

6

“You shall not murder.”

7

“You shall not commit adultery.”

¹⁴ The term “kingdom of heaven” is used throughout Matthew’s gospel and means the “kingdom of God.” Many Jewish people as a pious observance will not use the name “God” so use an evasive synonym in its place. The kingdom of God simply means the rule of God or God ruling over His people.

8

“You shall not steal.”

9

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

10

“You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

“Torah” Defined

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Law is Hitting the Mark while Sin is Missing the Mark *Insights from Hebrew*

LAW! Such a harsh word. A word disliked and abhorred by many Christians. But was this always the case? Why did David delight in the “Law”? (Ps 1:2, 119:70,77,174) Why did Paul – the misunderstood apostle say the same thing? “I delight in the law of God, in my inner being.” (Rom 7:22). A simple word study into the original Manuscripts of the Scriptures can help us understand God’s Law in new light.

The word commonly translated as “LAW” in our English versions of the Scriptures is “Torah” in the Original Hebrew and derives from the root word “Yarah”:

Strong’s Hebrew Concordance H8451 – תורה – tôrâh

From H3384; a precept or statute, especially the Decalogue or Pentateuch: – law.

(Brown-Driver-Briggs’ Hebrew Lexicon – law, direction, instruction)

Strong’s Hebrew Concordance H3384 – ירה – yârâh

A primitive root; properly to flow as water (that is, to rain); transitively to lay or throw (especially an arrow, that is, to shoot); figuratively to point out (as if by aiming the finger), to teach: – (+) archer, cast, direct, inform, instruct, lay, shew, shoot, teach (-er, -ing), through.

(Brown-Driver-Briggs’ Hebrew Lexicon – to throw, shoot, cast, pour)

Looking at the definitions given on the Strong’s Concordance and BDB Lexicon, it is clear that Torah and its root word Yarah are connected to “teaching and instruction”. And not only is it connected to these ideas, it also denotes “shooting an arrow” or “taking aim”. A few examples of usage of the word “Yarah” is given below:

Genesis 46:28 And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct (H3384) his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

1 Samuel 20:20 And I will shoot (H3384) three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark.

Psalms 64:7 But God shall shoot (H3384) at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

Exodus 4:12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach (H3384) thee what thou shalt say.

Leviticus 10:11 And that ye may teach (H3384) the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

Psalms 119:102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught (H3384) me.

Since we have looked at the meaning of Torah, let us look at another word which is closely connected with it in Scripture – the word “SIN”. The word commonly translated as “SIN” in our English versions of the Scriptures is “Chatta’ah” in the Original Hebrew and derives from the root word “Chatta”:

Strong's Hebrew Concordance H2403 – חַטָּאָה – chattâ'âh

From H2398: an offence (sometimes habitual sinfulness), and its penalty, occasion, sacrifice, or expiation; also (concretely) an offender: – punishment (of sin), purifying (-fication for sin), sin (-ner, offering).

(Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon – sin, sinful, sin offering)

Strong's Hebrew Concordance H2398 – חָטָא – chââ'

A primitive root; properly to miss; hence (figuratively and generally) to sin; by inference to forfeit, lack, expiate, repent, (causatively) lead astray, condemn: – bear the blame, cleanse, commit [sin], by fault, harm he hath done, loss, miss, (make) offend (-er), offer for sin, purge, purify (self), make reconciliation, (cause, make) sin (-ful, -ness), trespassive.

(Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon – to sin, miss, miss the way, go wrong, incur guilt, forfeit, purify from uncleanness)

Looking at the definitions given on the Strong's Concordance and BDB Lexicon, it is clear that Chatta'ah and its root word Chatta are connected to “missing and going astray”. It denotes “missing the mark”. An example is given below:

Judges 20:16 Among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men left handed; everyone could sling stones at a hair breadth, and not **miss (H2398)**

The relationship between Sin and Law

As per John's explanation in his 1st Epistle, Sin = Breaking the Law (**1 John 3:4** “Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.”).

While “Law” means to “shoot”, “take aim”, “direct” and “instruct”, “Sin” means to “miss” or “go astray”. If we put this thought in a picture form, “Torah” is an archer who aims/shoots at a target, while “Sin” is the same archer “missing the mark”. If we stop taking aim at the perfect instructions of God (“The law of the Lord is perfect,” Psalm 19:7), we stand to miss the mark, thereby falling into “Sin”.

– Word Study by Key2Changes.com

What does it mean to Walk with God?

It does not mean to have the intellectual understanding of the workings of God. No, I am walking with God . . . is like a dance . . . What does that mean?

(defined) Torah law is the same word for “Walk”, Jewish law is not called any of the legal terms; Jewish law is called “the walk” . . . here we uncover the essences of Faith as it should be understood and lived according to the Scriptures . . . to live with faith is not only to live in action, but it is to live faithfully . . .

. . . (the root of faith is) Emunah “Faith”, Emun “Practice”, Ne’eman “Loyalty” . . . Biblical faith directs us towards a living relationship with God, that's the essence of Covenant; in relationships there is moments of intimacy, there is moments of distance, highs, lows . . . relationship is real, its dynamic, but to walk with God, to be wholehearted is to be “loyal” in our encounter with God . . . (we) touch the ultimate good . . . we align ourselves with that “Vision”, in that direction, and then the walk begins . . . one step at a time . . . we do not have all the answers. There is so much unknown, so much mystery, but we are always given enough to take the next step . . .

Let's look at the word "Israel". Inside the word "Israel" is "*struggle*", but the word itself "Israel" is made up of two words, one is "*Straight*" and then you have "*God*", so think about what that is saying to us, what is it to live by the faith of Israel; it is to put God up in front of our "Vision", and then "*Straight*", we have a path, we have our eyes set on the Kingdom of God, our highest ideals, our values that will never be corrupted, we will . . . live out our lives with Laser like Focus, "*Straight*" ahead.

The default of this world is "*struggle*", and the definition of Israel is to "*Struggle and to Prevail*", we have the keys, how to persevere in the hard times and prevail . . . we have been gifted . . . "Israel" . . . we are going to be challenged and pushed to the ends of our limits and beyond; and that seems to be one of the fundamental purposes of life . . . to grow beyond ourselves, in the struggle I become more than who I am, maybe that is the purpose here, to become more than who you are . . . that is why Israel is called "to embrace the struggle, to embody the struggle", when you prevail you emerge triumphed, you emerge greater and stronger. A life of *Faith* is not something that you can just casually say, "*I believe*". . . that is not going to last. Biblical "Faith", you contend with the world, you struggle with the world, you struggle towards God, you struggle with yourself, and in the struggle you discover your strength, you discover your character, your inner value, you discover yourself; the challenges of life are going to hit us and there is nothing we can do about that, but in confronting the suffering of life, you can do something honorable, admirable, knowable, worthy, glorious, powerful, helpful, upright . . . right there, that is the light of Israel . . . in that struggle you can bring the light of those amazing gifts to the world. *Faith* is not trying to convince yourself of the existence of a transcendent power that you can believe in . . . that is a cognitive approach to faith, that is the approach to solving a scientific problem. The prophets were not scientists . . . I do not believe that I love *God*, I live my love *for God*, and out of my loyalty and action, a deeper relationship is developed. *Faith* is a life committed to action, to love . . . a covenant . . . God makes a covenant with us . . . a covenant is a commitment . . . to be committed in practice, in action, to be loyal in your life, that is the root of what the word means, it means "*Loyal*", it is to be loyal to the internal calling inside of you . . . there is a calling inside of all of us . . . God's law is written in our heart if we just open it up and look in . . .

What did Abraham have, "*a Calling*", a move away from organized religion, and it is a return to a relationship, a return to a simple pure wholehearted "walk with God" . . . walking and living in alignment with God . . . with the highest ideal you could imagine . . . that is *Biblical Faith* . . . to live life with love as your driving force, with unshakable character, and the courage of Joshua to struggle and prevail and conquer the land of Israel . . .

. . . we have no idea how much power you will discover in your walk through life as you start aiming towards the higher good, and in pursuit of your highest self, and in pursuit of the ultimate good, that's where you will find the meaning in your life, when you start living with character, and you start walking with God aligned with your ideals, good things will happen, you will be blessed . . .

. . . that does not always mean you're going to succeed in every endeavor or in every project, but "*Committed*", living "*Committed*" to "walking with God", ensures that every day in pursuit of that goal you will be blessed, even if the goal is never accomplished. Everyone needs to take a strategy of how they are going to live life, this is the Biblical Strategy, this is the "*Biblical Walk*", to walk uncompromisingly, "*Straight with God*" . . . that is the Deeper Meaning of the Biblical Promise:

“He who Blesses Israel will be Blessed” - (meaning) *If you live a life committed to manifesting the ultimate good, committed to building Zion, you will attract good into your life, that is the essences of what it means to walking with God. To live in the Walk. We have a covenant, and a commitment to the ultimate good. We have temptations to our right and we have self-doubts to the left, and Biblical Faith is to walk in alignment with that Vision no matter. That is the essence of loyalty to the King.*

. . . What is that next stage, the Law is going to be written on our hearts. What does that mean? It is a mistake to say that this is a prophecy that has already been fulfilled, it must be fulfilled again, it must be fulfilled in our generation, that’s the message. Open your heart, there is . . . a place inside of you that is calling you to be a higher being, and if all of us hear that calling, if all of us live by that, we manifest a joint destiny that all of us are collected to. From the mountains of Judea to the Colorado Rocky’s, it’s . . . one destiny, a House of Prayer for all Nations, that will be a Blessing for all Nations. So, *“to walk with God”*, may our Walk direct us to that ultimate Prophetic Vision . . . aligned with His Torah (*God’s teaching and instruction, the walk He is calling us to*), may we all walk whole heartedly with God, all the way to a new rebuilt Jerusalem.

– excerpts from an audio teaching of a Rabbi living in Judea, on the Biblical Definition of “Torah”

You Who Practice Lawlessness Matthew 7:21-23

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'¹⁵

Lawlessness (Strong’s No. 458 – *translation: anomia*) properly, without law; *lawlessness; the utter disregard for God's law (His written and living Word)*. 1 John 3:4, *“Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.”* While “Law” means to “shoot”, “take aim”, “direct” and “instruct”, “Sin” means to “miss” or “go astray”. If we put this thought in a picture form, **“Torah”** (*the teaching and instruction of God*) is an archer who aims/shoots at a target, while “Sin” is the same archer “missing the mark”. If we stop taking aim at the **perfect instructions of God** (“Torah”), we stand to miss the mark, thereby falling into “Sin” (i.e. 2 Thessalonians 2, **The Man of Lawlessness**).

Jesus clearly tells His disciples that not everyone who declares that Jesus is Lord actually belongs to Him. He is cautioning His disciples about an error concerning salvation that will creep into the Church.

Both the apostle Paul (Romans 10:8-21, *“. . . But they have not all obeyed the gospel . . .”*) and Peter (2 Peter 3:16-18, *“. . . take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.”*) talk about this error, concerning the lordship of Jesus Christ, which involves giving only mental ascent to the fact that Jesus is Lord. People will simply

¹⁵ 'DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS'. *Leviticus 26*. **Lawlessness** here means living without law or in violation of the law. Followers of Jesus Christ are still under law . . . The Law of the Spirit of Christ, a higher standard of living, the Spirit of the Law.

say the words “*Jesus is Lord*” and believe they will be saved. To them the statement becomes a magical incantation or ticket to heaven. Whereas the truth of the matter is that **when a person confesses that Jesus is Lord, he is in fact stating that he will do everything that his Lord commands him to do.** When a person does not do as his Lord commands it shows that he is a hypocrite, saying one thing and doing another. His behavior reveals his character. He really doesn’t believe in his heart that Jesus is Lord or he would do what Jesus says. As James (James 2:17) puts it, “*Faith without works is dead.*”

In **John 12:46-50**, Jesus reiterates this truth:

*I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. And if anyone hears My sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. **He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.** For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”*

– excerpts from Lesson 17: Fruit Inspection, on pages 84-89

Discipleship Lessons by Verse

Book 1

“Fishers of Men”

John 1:35-51, Luke 5:1-11, 27-28, Matthew 4:18-22, 9:9, Mark 1:16-20, 2:14

Lesson 1

John 4:1-42

Lesson 2

Matthew 5:1-12, Luke 6:20-26

Lesson 3

Matthew 5:13-16

Lesson 4

Mathew 5:17-20

Lesson 5

Matthew 5:21-26

Lesson 6

Matthew 5:27-32

Lesson 7

Matthew 5:33-37

Lesson 8

Matthew 5:38-42, Luke 6:29-30

Lesson 9

Matthew 5:43-48, Luke 6:27-28, 31-35

Lesson 10

Matthew 6:1-18

Lesson 11

Matthew 6:9-15

Lesson 12

Matthew 6:19-23

Lesson 13

Matthew 7:1-5, Luke 6:36-42

Lesson 14

Matthew 7:6

Lesson 15

Matthew 7:7-14

Lesson 16

Matthew 7:15-29, Luke 6:43-49

Lesson 17

Learn what Jesus teaches us to do, what it means and how it is applied to our lives today as we walk by the Spirit!

Fishers of Men . . . introduces Christians to the subject of becoming disciples of Jesus Christ and covers the first 17 lessons He taught His disciples. Beginning with His command to “Follow Me,” Jesus lays a solid foundation of instructions for developing the character of Christ within individuals.

- *Jesus’ teachings have completely transformed my life. (M.M.)*
- *Jesus invites you to walk with Him and learn from Him. (J.G.)*
- *I have been going to church for over 30 years and have never heard anything like this before. Why don’t churches teach this? (J.R.)*

Upon coming to faith in Jesus Christ at age 33, Michael Gibson earnestly wanted someone to disciple him in the faith. Finding no one . . . he became a student, and then teacher of God’s word.

One statement in particular captured his attention, “Go . . . make disciples . . . baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20) From that he wrote his first book, “Follow Me” (1996), a compilation of the four gospels into one account while highlighting each of the 263 instructions Jesus commanded His disciples to do and teach. Subsequently, he has written the three-part teaching series, “A Journey with Jesus” and many other books which help equip believers to do the work of the ministry.

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