



Article 1 HEBRAIC SCRIPTURAL TERMS:

INTRODUCTION:

Q. Why do we need to read scriptures with a Hebrew view of the Bible anyway?

If we are to study & understand the Bible correctly & accurately we first need to accept three ideas:

- A) That all the books of the Bible have been given to mankind by YHWH. Speaking to many different people through a very long period of time.
There is nothing in these books that should not be included, neither has anything been a mistake in the original language (ie Hebrew)!
- B) The books of the Bible were originally written in the Hebrew language by men & women who were mostly Hebrew & thought in a Hebrew way.
- C) Our Messiah was Jewish & taught & thought in a Hebrew manner. If we truly wish to understand correctly what He taught we need to understand as He understood the Bible. (He would have had the Tanakh the 'Old Testament' only upon which the 'New Testament is based).

You may have been taught that our so called "New testament" books were first written in Greek before being translated into other languages. Even today the majority of preachers, pastors & ministers still believe this. Yet the evidence we have today overwhelmingly shows that this is not true:

Many believe that the Jews lost their Hebrew language when in exile in Babylon, yet after 400 years in Egypt they did not stop speaking Hebrew. Scripture also tells us that after the exiles returned from Babylon only a small number could not speak Hebrew. At this time actions were taken to keep the Hebrew as the main language. Another piece of evidence for Hebrew still being the language of the Jews is that after the Babylonian exile all the books written after this exile (eg Zechariah, Haggai, Malachi, Nehemiah, Ezra & Esther) were all written in Hebrew.

Some believe that under the Greek Empire that Jews began to speak Greek rather than Hebrew. Yet the book of the Maccabees shows that although the Greeks under Antiochus Epiphanies did try to force the Jews to speak only Greek there was strong resistance to this. Indeed a major military victory by the Maccabees over the much larger Greek army is celebrated with the feast of Chanukkah even today. This feast was also celebrated by Yahshua Messiah at the temple in Jerusalem.



The 1st century Jewish historian – Josephus, writes that Hebrew was the language of Jews of his time. He even writes that the Romans asked him to translate their call to the Jews to surrender in the Hebrew language of the Jews. Josephus goes even further and states that 1st century Jews could not even speak or understand Greek but instead held onto their own language – Hebrew. He wrote copies of much of his history in Hebrew so that Israel could read it.

The Greek translated versions of the scriptures still have so many Hebrew idioms within the text. So the question then arises why would Greek writers include so many Hebrew Idioms ?

Added to this many of the so called ‘early church fathers’ who recorded much of the early ‘church’ history wrote that the gospels and much of the ‘New Testament’ was written in Hebrew not Greek!

CORRECTLY UNDERSTANDING THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE:

In this first article we will introduce you to several words which have very particular meanings to a Hebrew mind.

For each word we will then look at several places in Scripture where these words are used.

When we understand the meanings of these words correctly we will have a much greater understanding of what YHWH is telling us. For our first word to look at we will see what scripture means by the term – the ‘WORD’.

THE WORD:

The verses Micah 4:2 & Isa 5:24 from a Hebrew based translation of the scriptures is given below:

Mic 4:2 Many Gentiles will go and say, "Come, let's go up to the mountain of Adonai, to the house of the God of Ya`akov! He will teach us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For out of Tziyon will go forth Torah, the word of Adonai from Yerushalayim. (Complete Jewish Bible - CJB)

Isa 5:24 Therefore, as fire licks up the stubble, and the chaff is consumed in the flame; so their root will rot, and their flowers scatter like dust; because they have rejected the Torah of Adonai-Tzva'ot, they have despised the word of the Holy One of Isra'el. (Complete Jewish Bible -CJB)

Some versions will use the term ‘LAW’ rather than the word ‘TORAH’.

The translation of the word LAW for the Hebrew word TORAH is not a good translation. While it is true that the TORAH does contain LAWS for how Yisrael should function as a nation, it is not all about LAW.

The better understanding of the word TORAH is ‘YHWH’s loving instructions for Yisrael to live by’



Both these verses show that these terms 'The WORD' and the 'LAW' and the 'TORAH' are the same thing!!

Now look at these following verses. When we replace the word LAW or WORD with TORAH we begin to get a different perspective:

Exo 24:12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a **law**, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them. (KJV)

Exo 24:12 Adonai said to Moshe, "Come up to me on the mountain, and stay there. I will give you the stone tablets with the **Torah** and the mitzvot I have written on them, so that you can teach them." (CJB)

(Here again we see the word 'Torah' is more accurate than either 'Law' or 'The Word')
In these two examples we now also have another Hebrew word for the term 'commandments.)

Other verses to check with the word Torah:

Josh 1:8, Matt 5:17, Rom 2:15, Jer 31:33, Isa 1:10, John 1:1, Ex 13:9, Ezek 7:26, Ezek 22:26, Isa 5:24, Isa 8:16.

See what scripture is meaning when these verses are changed?

LIGHT

When we look up the verses Ps119:105 and Prov 6:23 we read the following:

Psa 119:105 Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Pro 6:23 For the commandment *is* a lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life:

These 2 verses tell us 'Light' is the WORD or the LAW. But we have just seen that both of these words are the TORAH.

Now check out the verses below. Now we can begin to better understand what the word 'light' in these scriptures means.

Matthew 4:16, 5:16

Luke 1:79, 2:32

John 1:4, 3:19, 8:12, 9:5

Acts 26:18

TRUTH

In the verses Ps119:142 and Ps 119:151, John 17:17 below



Psa 119:142 Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* the truth.

Psa 119:151 Thou *art* near, O LORD; and all thy commandments *are* truth.

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

we clearly see that truth is the same as the LAW and the WORD and the COMMANDMENTS.
But we have already seen that these same words are better translated as the TORAH.

So we can now say that when scripture uses the word TRUTH it is referring to YHWH's TORAH given to Yisrael.

Check out the following verses now that you understand what the word 'truth' in scripture means.

John 1:17,8:32, 3:21,4:23-24, 16:13

Hosea 4:1

Zech 8:3

2 Cor 6:7

Eph 5:9, 6:14

SIN

The verses I John 3:4, Lev 5:17 tell us 'Sin' is.

1Jn 3:4 Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

Lev 5:17 "And when any being sins, and has done what is not to be done, *against* any of the commands of יהוה, though he knew it not, yet he shall be guilty and shall bear his crookedness.

Clearly here we are being told that what the BIBLE calls 'SIN' is anything we do that breaks a command of the TORAH.

In the King James version it refers to 'lawlessness' (some versions use the word 'iniquity') but we already now know that the word 'law' means 'Torah'. So 'lawlessness' means 'torahlessness'. Which means to break or be without the Torah.

Now check out some other verses below with this new understanding of sin.

Jer 31:34, 32:35

Rom 3:9, 6:1-2, 6:12

We see the word 'lawlessness' better translated in the Complete Jewish Bible when we read 2 Thessalonians 2:3 where the phrase 'who separates himself from Torah' is used instead of 'lawlessness'.

2Th 2:3 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 Torah** has been revealed, the one destined for doom. (CJB)



Now that we understand what the word 'lawlessness' (or the word 'iniquity') in scripture means we are better able to understand what other passages that use this word actually are saying to us. Eg:

Matt 7:23, 23:28,24:12

Rom 6:19

1Cor 13:6

2Cor 6:14

FREEDOM

The verse in John 8:32 links the 'truth' and freedom together. Yahshua tells us that if we have and hold to the truth we will be free.

Joh 8:32 and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

But we already know that the 'truth' in scripture is the 'Torah' so Yahshua is saying that if we hold to the Torah we will actually experience freedom.

How then can Christians say that the LAW (the Torah) has been done away with to make us free? They make such statements as 'we have been freed from the law'.

GRACE:

In most churches the people are taught that they are now under a time of 'grace' and before the time of Yahshua people were under the 'LAW'. This is of course because most churches believe that the 'LAW' has been done away with.

Earlier we found out that the three English words 'WORD', 'LAW', and 'TORAH' are all used in different Bible versions to mean that same thing. What the churches are believing is that the 'TORAH' has been done away with and believers today live under a time of GRACE.

So what does this word GRACE in scripture really mean?

There is a difficulty in studying this word because in English this **one** word 'GRACE' can have **two different meanings:**

GRACE = a person who has charm, loveliness, goodness, favour, preciousness. We would say that such a person is graceful.

But also

GRACE = a person who receives undeserved favour or mercy from another person.

In both Hebrew and Greek languages there are two separate words for these two meanings:

Hebrew 'CHEN' = a person who has charm, loveliness, favour, preciousness (in Greek 'Charis)



'CHESED' = a person who receives undeserved favour or mercy from another person. (in Greek Eleos)

The English scriptures often use the words 'lovingkindness' or 'mercy' for the word 'Chesed'. And the words 'grace' or 'favour' for the word 'Chen'.

Some good examples of these two different words can be found in the verse below:

Gen 6:8 But Noah found grace (Chen) in the eyes of the LORD.

Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy (Chesed) shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Luk 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour (Charis) with God and man.

Mat 5:7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy (Eleo).

Now that we know there are two separate meanings for the term grace we can find out what the scriptures are really saying concerning 'grace'. Check out some example verses such as:

Ps 103:11, Ps 118:4, Prov 16:6, John 1:17

RIGHTEOUSNESS

We can find out what righteousness means from the verses:

Psa 119:123 Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

Psa 119:40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

Psa 119:172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.

Isa 51:7 Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law;

Deu 6:25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

Eze 18:9 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; **he is just**, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.



(in this last verse many translations use the word 'just' instead of 'righteous') See for example the translation from 'The Scriptures 1998' below:

Eze 18:9 if he walks in My laws, and he has guarded My right-rulings in truth – **he is righteous**, he shall certainly live!" declares the Master יהוה'.

All these verse not only show that righteousness or being righteous is linked to the Torah but go further and show that is by LIVING THE TORAH that a person become righteous.

Now we can understand what is really being said when we read verses such as those below:

Isa 42:21, Isa 32:1, Isa 32:17, Isa 48:18, Dan 12:3, Hosea 2:19, Zech 8:8, Matt 3:15, Matt 5:6, Matt 6:33, Rom 10:5, Rev 19:8

WISDOM

Again let us look at several verses to really understand what wisdom is all about.

Deu 4:5 "See, I have taught you laws and right-rulings, as יהוה' my Elohim commanded me, to do thus in the land which you go to possess.

Deu 4:6 "And you shall guard and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding

1Ch 22:12 "Only, let יהוה' give you wisdom and understanding, and command you concerning Yisra'el, so that you guard the Torah of יהוה' your Elohim,

Jer 8:9 "The wise shall be put to shame, they shall be broken down and caught. See, they have rejected the Word of יהוה', so what wisdom do they have?

From these we can see that wisdom is not just connected to the Torah of YHWH but it is obtained by living the Torah commands.

Wisdom is also connected to two other aspects of YHWH's character and should also be in those who follow him (his disciples). We can find these aspects in many different verses. The verses below show us these two other aspects.

Job 12:13, Job 28:12, Job 28:20, Job 38:36, Job 39:17, Ps 49:3, Prov 1:2, Prov 2:2, Prov 10:13

Ps 37:30

Copyright 2016 by Rabbi John Boyd. All rights reserved. No part of this material may be reproduced in any way without written permission.