

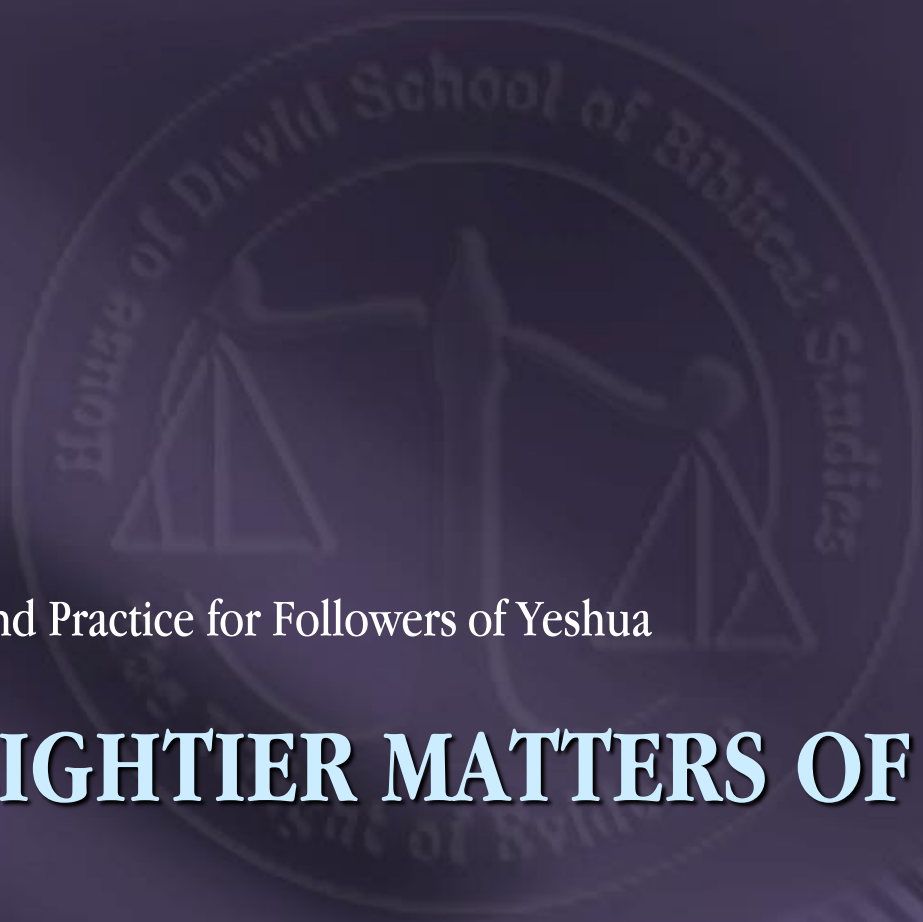
<http://HouseofDavidFellowship.com>

info@HouseofDavidFellowship.com

Richmond, Virginia USA

I counsel thee to
buy of me gold
tried in the fire...
Revelation 3:18





A Look at Faith and Practice for Followers of Yeshua

THE WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF TORAH

Julie Aydlotte

What We'll Cover

- What are the “weightier” matters of Torah?
- Weightier than what? (Pet Messianic Issues)
- Are there degrees of sin? What out-ranks what?
- Does Yahweh look at everyone’s sin the same way?
- Sin ‘in the camp’ & it’s correction
- Building halacha on exceptions & extremes
- Building halacha based on the weightier matters of Torah
- What will the King say?

Matthew 23:23 CJB

Yeshua is speaking here:

“Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P’rushim! You pay your tithes of mint, dill and cumin; but you have neglected the **weightier** matters of the Torah — **justice, mercy, trust**. **These are the things you should have attended to** — without neglecting the others! ...

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Matthew 23:23 CJB

- **Weightier** = Greek βαρύς (barus)
- Strong's # G926, TDNT #1:556,95
- Means: heavy, grave, of great moment
- LXX equivalent = Hebrew כבוד (kavod)
- Strong's #H3519, TWOT #943d,943e
- Means: glory, glorious, figuratively heavy ...

Weightier means having a heavier glory attached.
These are the more glorious matters of Torah. ...

Matthew 23:23 CJB

Yeshua is speaking here:

“Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P’rushim! You pay your tithes of mint, dill and cumin; but you have neglected the **weightier** matters of the Torah — **justice**,

Matthew 23:23 CJB

- **Justice** = Greek κρίσιν (krisin)
- Strong's #G2920, TDNT #3:941,469
- Means: separation, selection, judgment, tribunal, right, justice
- LXX equivalent = Hebrew מִשְׁפָּט (mishpat)
- Strong's # H4941, TWOT #2443c
- Means: decision, judgment, legal case, claim, interpretation, legal process
- “Righteousness and **justice (mishpat)** are the foundation of your throne; kindness (chesed) and truth (emet, like emunah) go before your face.” Psalm 89:14 ...

What Does 'Justice' Mean?

“The basic meaning of this word is **to establish the heavenly norm or pattern on earth.**” Normally this concept is applied to society, i.e., **the bringing of society into the right order or arrangement.** In this sense it is translated “justice.” But in three passages its meaning is applied to a building. In Exodus 26:30; 1 Kings 6:38; and Ezekiel 42:11 this word is used in reference to the design of the tabernacle, the temple of Solomon, and the future temple prophesied by Ezekiel, respectively. Significantly, in all these passages it refers to **the design or arrangement of God’s dwelling place.**”

-Bruce K. Waltke, Creation Account in Genesis

Spirit Brings Justice

- “...until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest. Then justice (mishpat) will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.” (Isaiah 32:15-16 ESV)
- Yahweh’s Spirit being poured out is connected to justice being manifest.
- Evidence of Yahweh’s Spirit in our lives?
- Are we walking out Yahweh’s justice (mishpat) in the ‘wilderness’ in which we live?

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Matthew 23:23 CJB

- **Mercy** = Greek ἔλεος (eleos)
- Strong's #G1656, TDNT #2:477,222
- Means: kindness or good will towards another, joined with a desire to help them
- LXX equivalent = Hebrew חֶסֶד (chesed)
- Strong's #H2617, TWOT # 698a,699a
- Means: goodness, graciousness, joint obligation, always used of a covenant relationship
- “I will rejoice and be glad in your **steadfast love (chesed)**, because you have seen my affliction; you have known the distress of my soul...” Psalm 31:7 ESV ...

Matthew 23:23 CJB

Yeshua is speaking here:

“Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P’rushim! You pay your tithes of mint, dill and cumin; but you have neglected the **weightier** matters of the Torah — **justice, mercy, trust.**

Matthew 23:23 CJB

- **Trust** = Greek πίστις (pistis)
- Strong's #G4102, TDNT #6:174,849
- Means: fidelity, faithfulness, the character of one who can be relied on
- LXX equivalent = Hebrew אֱמוּנָה (emunah)
- Strong's #H530, TWOT #116e
- Means: steadfastness, firmness, trustworthiness, duration, constancy, faithfulness
- "...I will sing of the steadfast love (chesed) of Yahweh, forever; with my mouth I will make known your **faithfulness** (emunah) to all generations." Psalm 89:1 ESV*

Matthew 23:23 CJB

Yeshua is speaking here:

“Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P’rushim! You pay your tithes of mint, dill and cumin; but you have neglected the **weightier** matters of the Torah — **justice, mercy, trust.**

These are the things you should have attended to — without neglecting the others!”

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Matthew 23:23 JAEV

“Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and Pharisees! You pay close attention to the minute, check-off-a-list details of Torah observance; but you have completely ignored **the more glorious Torah** — **establishing the heavenly pattern on earth (justice/mishpat)**, **kindness towards others joined with a desire to help them (mercy/chesed)**, **faithfulness (trust/emunah)**. These are the things you must attend to — without neglecting the others!”

More Glorious Than What?

- “...pay your tithes of mint, dill and cumin...” (Mt. 23:23)
- Not specifically commanded in Torah, only in Talmud
- An example of taking a principle in Torah (tithing) and adding extra-Biblical application
- Not necessarily bad for the sake of conscience (ex. tithing, mixing threads) ...
- Doesn't mean we don't observe the commandments - it means we do them with the right heart.

'Pet' Messianic Issues

- Tzit-tzit: Women? Length? Color? Material? Knots? Tradition?
- Moons: Conjunction? Lunar Sabbath? Calendar? Sighting?
- Beards? Headcoverings? Linen clothing?
- End-Times? Prepping? Separationist Living?
- Jewish Tradition or Free Spirits?

Not one piece of it matters if we aren't living out the heart of Torah! ...

Isaiah 1:11-16 CJB*

“Why are all those sacrifices offered to me?” asks Yahweh.

“I’m fed up with burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fattened animals! I get no pleasure from the blood of bulls, lambs and goats! Yes, you come to appear in my presence; but who asked you to do this, to trample through my courtyards? Stop bringing worthless grain offerings! They are like disgusting incense to me! Rosh-Hodesh, Shabbat, calling convocations —

Isaiah 1: 11-17 CJB*

I can't stand evil together with your assemblies! Everything in me hates your Rosh-Hodesh and your festivals; they are a burden to me — I'm tired of putting up with them! When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; no matter how much you pray, I won't be listening; because your hands are covered with blood. Wash yourselves clean! Get your evil deeds out of my sight! **Stop doing evil, learn to do good!**

Seek justice (mishpat), relieve the oppressed, defend orphans, plead for the widow.” ...

2 Corinthians 3:6 CJB

“He has even made us competent to be workers serving a New Covenant, the essence of which is not a written text but the Spirit. For the written text brings death, but the Spirit gives life.”

“...the essence of which is...the Spirit...”

The Letter vs. The Spirit

When our method of obeying Torah commandments sabotages the mishpat (justice), chesed (mercy), or emunah (trust), required by Yahweh, it needs to be discarded because it is missing the goal.

Romans 10:4 CJB

“For the goal at which the Torah aims is the Messiah, who offers righteousness to everyone who πιστεύω (pisteuō).”

...

(Root word ‘pistis’ = for everyone who is steadfast, firm, trustworthy, faithful)

Faithful to walk as He walked?...

What did Yeshua do?...

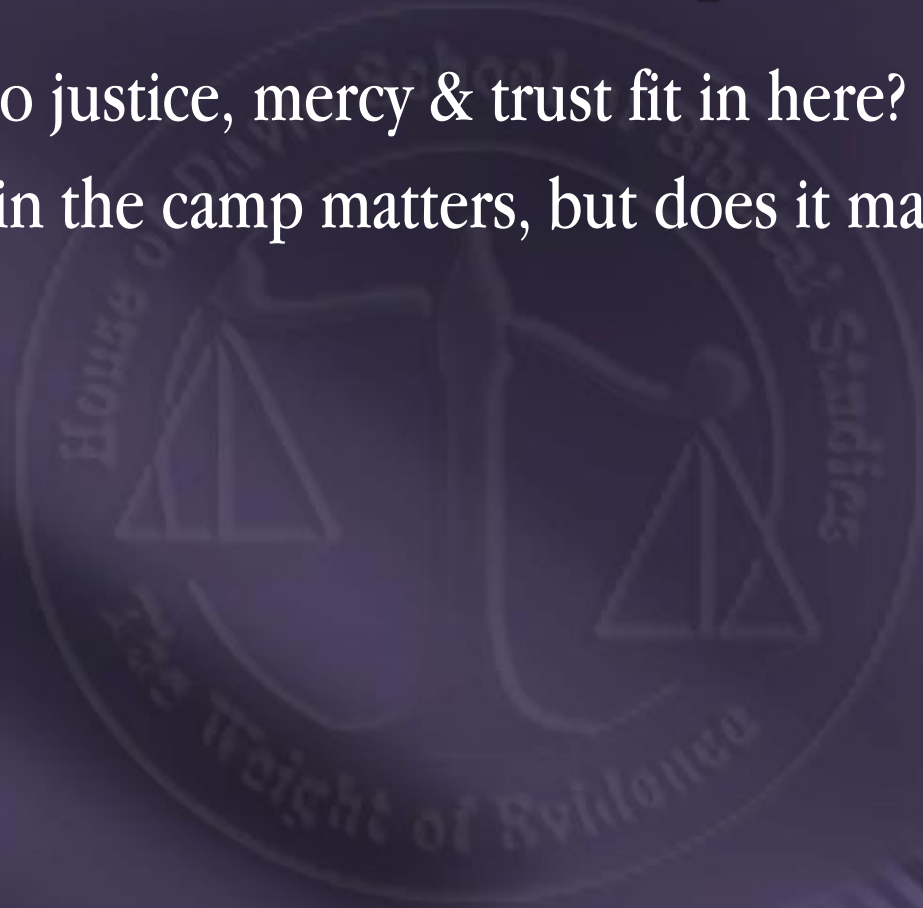
Isaiah 42:1-4 ESV

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him;

he will bring forth justice (mishpat) to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; **he will faithfully bring forth justice (mishpat)**. He will not grow faint or be discouraged **till he has established justice (mishpat)** in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.”

Sin 'in the Camp'?

- Where do justice, mercy & trust fit in here?
- Yes, sin in the camp matters, but does it matter *most*?



Principle vs. Method

- Principles: Universal truths derived from Scripture that apply to all covenant people at all times
- Methods: How an individual walks out any particular truth
- Principles never change. Methods can (especially as our understanding grows).
- Example: Observing Passover is a principle. How you determine what day to do so is the method.
- Example: Wearing tzitziot (tassels) to remember the commandments is a principle. What they look like, how they are attached, etc. is the method.

Principle vs. Method

- Is this really *sin* against a clearly stated Torah commandment? (1John 3:4)
- Could it be just my opinion? (Verse story) . . .
- Is “my way or the highway” supported by Scripture? . . .
- Is it an issue over which you are willing to neglect the weightier matters of Torah?
- True sin **can** be addressed **without neglecting the weightier matters of Torah.**

I'm Sure it's Sin, Now What?

- Never assume that sin is high-handed and rebellious. When in doubt, assume ignorance. (John 7:24) . . .
- People not raised with an understanding of how to walk out Torah (Jeremiah 16:19) . . .
- Different stages of the same journey (Romans 15:1) . . .
- Remember where we came from and have empathy (Deuteronomy 24) . . .
- Newbies overwhelmed (2 Corinthians 1:3-5).

All Sin is the Same?

- All sin is alike in these two ways:
- Every sin earns death – intentional, unintentional, chatta'at, avon, pasha...
- “For what one earns from sin is death; but eternal life is what one receives as a free gift from Elohim, in union with the Messiah Yeshua, our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23 CJB*)
- Through repentance and trusting in Yeshua's finished work, every sin (*) can be atoned for – intentional, unintentional, chatta'at, avon, pasha: Isaiah 53:5, Acts 13:38-39, Matthew 9:2-6
- (*) Exception clause: Mark 3:29, Hebrews 10...

Degrees of Sin? .

- Chatta'at = חַטָּאת
- Strong's #H2403, TWOT #638e
- Most common word used for sin in Scripture
- Typically translated in English as 'sin'
- Means: to miss or fall short of the goal or standard Yahweh has for a person, failing to observe the requirements for holy living, turning away from obedience
- The proverbial “missing the mark” word we learned from Christian doctrine

Degrees of Sin?

- (Chatta) shegagah = שְׁגָגָה ...
- Strong's #H7684, TWOT #2324a
- Means: error, fault, sin committed through inadvertence or ignorance, unintentionally, unwittingly, by mistake...
- Two causes:
- A person knows it is law, but unintentionally violates it (Numbers 35:22, Deuteronomy 19:4-10, Joshua 20:2-6,9)
- Sin happens without a person knowing they did wrong (Gen. 20:9, Numbers 22:34)

Degrees of Sin?

- Avon = אָוֹן
- Strong's #H5771, TWOT #1577a
- Typically translated in English as 'iniquity'
- Means: connected with the idea of perversion – a willful twisting and distorting of the will of Yahweh for selfish ends, has a connotation of continuing sin
- The *avon* of Israel was confessed over Azazel (the scapegoat) and sent out into the wilderness (Leviticus 16)
- "...they shall make amends for their **avon**, because they spurned my rules and their soul abhorred my statutes." Leviticus 26:42b
ESV

Degrees of Sin?

- Pesha = פְּשָׁעַ
- Strong's #H6588, TWOT #1846a
- Typically translated in English as 'transgression'
- Means: defiance, rebellion, a casting off of Yahweh's authority, a *willful* transgression done to spite Yahweh, a 'shaking one's fist in the air' sin
- Pesha indicates presumptuous sins that are normally committed by those who know better but willfully commit them anyway
- Pesha contains a sense of expansion, of breaking away, or of continuousness
- Psalm 5:10 ESV* ...

Yahweh: All Sin the Same?

- Position and Influence
- “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, since you know that we will be judged more severely.” James 3:1 CJB
- “And in his teaching he said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.” Mark 12:38-40 ESV

Yahweh: All Sin the Same?

- Position and Influence
- But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction...For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved.”
(2 Peter 2:1, 17b ESV)...

Yahweh: All Sin the Same?

- Opportunity and Understanding
- “And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.” Luke 12:47-48
ESV

Yahweh: All Sin the Same?

- Opportunity and Understanding
- “...but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” Matthew 18:6 ESV...
- “Yeshua answered, “You would have no power over me if it hadn’t been given to you from above; this is why the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” John 19:11 CJB...

Yahweh: All Sin the Same?

- Motives: Intentional or Unintentional
- “If an individual **sins by mistake**, he is to offer a female goat in its first year as a sin offering. The cohen will make atonement before Yahweh for the person who **makes a mistake by sinning inadvertently**; he will make atonement for him, and he will be forgiven — no matter whether he is a citizen of Isra’el or a foreigner living with them. You are to have one law for whoever it is that **does something wrong by mistake.**” ...

Numbers 15:27-29 CJB*

Yahweh: All Sin the Same?

- Motives: Intentional or Unintentional
- “But an individual who **does something wrong intentionally**, whether a citizen or a foreigner, is blaspheming Yahweh. That person will be cut off from his people. Because he has **had contempt for the word of Yahweh** and has disobeyed his command, that person will be cut off completely; his offense will remain with him.”

Numbers 15:30-31 CJB*

Step One – Overlooked?

- Can it be overlooked? (Proverbs 19:11) . . .
- Are you saying we should ignore sin?
- No and Yes.
- Matthew 5:19 says No. . . .
- Luke 6:43-44 says Yes. . . .
- Consider patterns of lifestyle: consistent fruit? . . .
- Starbucks story . . .
- Don't expect perfection overnight. We don't determine another's speed. Consistent repentance and change is the standard.

Step One – Overlooked?

- “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and Elohim will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death.” (1John 5:16 ESV*)
- Judging our intentions vs. another’s actions. Equal weights and measures are required by Torah. (Matthew 7:2, Deuteronomy 25:15)
- Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:19-21)-> it takes time...
- Yahweh knew that there would be sin that a person didn’t even know about *or understand* at the time it occurred (Leviticus 5)

Step Two – Educate

- Teach Torah principles as truth, methods as suggestions
- “...sweetness of the lips increases learning” (Proverbs 16:21)
- Eshet Chayil: “She opens her mouth with wisdom and the Torah of kindness is on her tongue.” (Proverbs 31:26)...
- “Elohim opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6, quoting Proverbs 3:34)
- Remember who we are representing as we teach – are we proper ambassadors or misrepresenting?...

Last Step – Correct .

- “Let **all** that you do be done in love.” (1 Corinthians 16:4)
- “Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that Elohim's **kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?**” (Romans 2:4)
- “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, **between you and him alone**. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.” (Matthew 18:15)
- Remember the proverbial phrase, “There, but for the grace of God, go I.” ...

Building Halacha on Exceptions and Extremes

*Hint: This is what we do *not* want to do*

Building Halachah on Exceptions and Extremes

- Achan (Joshua 7-9)
- Stole things consecrated to Yahweh to be destroyed and lied
- All Israel would have been destroyed (36 already had been) – Yahweh would not be with them
- He was stoned
- People died because of his avon, not ‘people were irritated’ – this was a very serious offense

Building Halachah on Exceptions and Extremes

- Did Yahweh threaten to punish all Israel when Miriam sinned?
- When Moses sinned?
- When Eli & his sons sinned?
- When Saul sinned?
- When Joe Messianic kept three days for Shavuot just to be sure?
- When Janie Graftee watched a movie on Shabbat?
- When Billy Bible's family responsibilities kept him from studying the Torah portion last week?

Building Halachah on Exceptions and Extremes

- Zimri & Pinchas (Numbers 25) ...
- Zimri **brazenly** traipsed through the camp with an idolatrous Midianite woman right when Israel was mourning because of the plague ...
- Pinchas killed Zimri (and the woman) because the judges were *already commanded by Yabweh* to do so (Numbers 25:4)

Building Halachah on Exceptions and Extremes

- We have to consider the context: Have **we** been commanded by Yahweh to kill in order to stop a plague?
- **Most. Assuredly. Not.**
- Is zeal for set-apartness commendable for the people of Yahweh?
- Yes, if...and only IF.
- **According to Yeshua, only if it is tempered by the weightier, more glorious matters of the Torah.**

Let's Not Rationalize

Examples used to justify neglecting the weightier matters of Torah when dealing with sin:

- Yeshua and the money-changers in Matthew 21 (hint: temple workers should have known better)
- This was *the Temple* (hint: zeal for his Father's house)
- Those who were making a mockery of justice and righteousness by stealing from people (hint: Yeshua was defending the weightier matters of Torah)
- Didn't run in angry and just 'lose it' on people (hint: *after* he made the whip)
- Context: Jeremiah 7. Would Yeshua not follow His Father's example?

...

Let's Not Rationalize

Examples used to justify neglecting the weightier matters of Torah when dealing with sin:

- John the Baptist
- Preached repentance (so did Yeshua), performed mikvahs (not drownings)
- Called groups of Pharisees and Saducees a brood of vipers and encouraged repentance (reputation)
- Called down Herod for adultery (hint: a convert to Judaism who should have known better, especially in his higher position)
- We can't use Christian movies as a basis for halachah . . .

Building Halacha on the Weightier Matters of Torah

*Hint: This is what we *do*
want to do*

What is Required of Us?

“Will Yahweh be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does Yahweh require of you but to

**do justice (mishpat), and to
love kindness (chesed), and to
walk humbly with your Elohim?”**

(Micah 6:8 ESV*)

What is Required of Us?

“The end of the matter; all has been heard. **Fear Elohim** and **keep his commandments**, for this is the whole duty of man. For Elohim will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.”

(Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 ESV*)

What is Required of Us?

“Rabbi, which is the greatest commandment in the Torah?” And he said to him, “You shall **love Yahweh your Elohim** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important commandment. And a second corresponds to it in mode of thinking, feeling and acting: You shall **love your neighbor as yourself**. On these two commandments hang or suspend all the law and the Prophets.”
(Matthew 22:36-40 JAEV)

Hand-In-Hand Commands



“If anyone says, “I love Elohim,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love Elohim whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves Elohim must also love his brother.”
(1John 4:20-21 ESV*)

Questions for Building Halacha.

- What am I hoping to accomplish through this method of walking out Torah?
- Will my behavior help anyone? Hurt?
- Will Yeshua be honored by my actions?
- Will this behavior show justice or mercy to others?
- Is this method a means of loving Yahweh **and** loving my neighbor?
- Will Yahweh be pleased with my manner of walking out this mitzvah (commandment)?...

What Will the King Say?

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, accompanied by all the angels, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be assembled before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. The ‘sheep’ he will place at his right hand and the ‘goats’ at his left...” (Matthew 25:31-33 CJB)

What Will the King Say?

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world.’ *“For you figured out the Sabbath and rebuked your family, you calculated the right calendar, you pronounced the name correctly, you figured out every un-kosher food additive, you booted out every congregation member who did not believe in your theology...”* Matthew 25:34-36 CJB

Italics Paraphrase by [Ryan White](#) – used with permission

What Will the King *Really* Say?

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you made me your guest, I needed clothes and you provided them, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’

...The King will say to them, ‘Yes! I tell you that whenever you did these things for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did them for me!’” Matthew 25:34-36, 40 CJB

Matthew 23:23 JAEV

“Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and Pharisees! You pay close attention to the minute, check-off-a-list details of Torah observance; but you have completely ignored **the more glorious Torah** — **establishing the heavenly pattern on earth (justice/mishpat)**, **kindness towards another joined with a desire to help them (mercy/chesed)**, **faithfulness (trust/emunah)**. These are the things you must have attended to — without neglecting the others!

