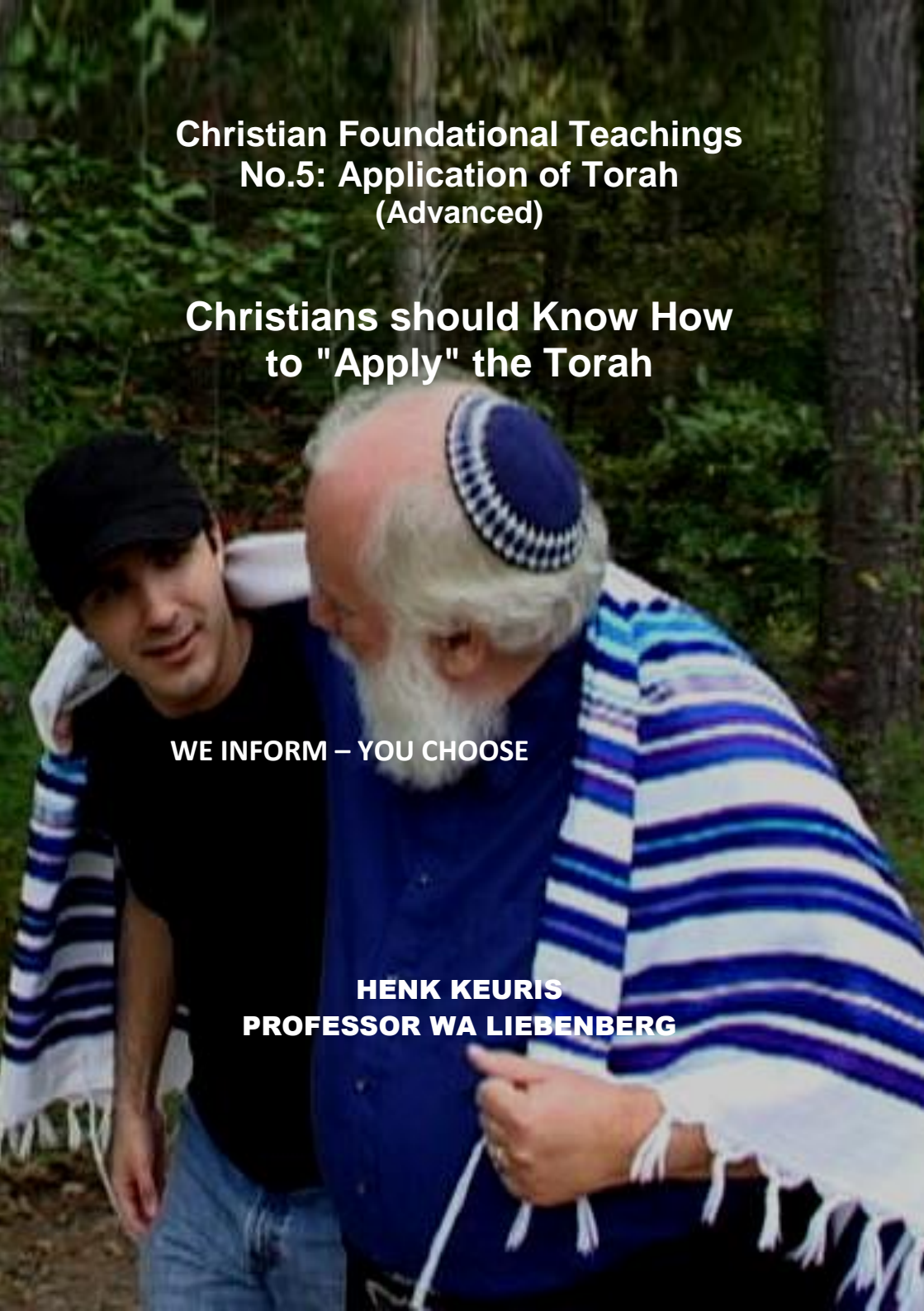


**Christian Foundational Teachings  
No.5: Application of Torah  
(Advanced)**

**Christians should Know How  
to "Apply" the Torah**

**WE INFORM – YOU CHOOSE**

**HENK KEURIS  
PROFESSOR WA LIEBENBERG**



# Christians should know How to "Apply" the Torah

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## Preface

YHWH "God" has called us to do two things. First, we are to never give up studying and seeking the correct interpretation of any given Bible passage. Second, such opportunities are golden moments for us to learn to show grace and love to others whose understanding of a given passage may differ from ours.

Throughout the HRTI's teachings, we use a slightly different vocabulary to that which some might be accustomed. We have chosen to use what many refer to as a Messianic vocabulary. The reasons being: first, using Hebraic-sounding words is another way to help you associate with the Hebraic Roots of your faith. Second, these words are not merely an outward show for us, they are truly an expression of who we are as Messianic Jews and non-Jews who have "taken hold" of our inheritance with Israel.

Instead of saying "Jesus", we call our Saviour "Y'shua" – the way His parents would have addressed Him in Hebrew. In addition, rather than referring to Y'shua as "Christ", we use the word "Messiah" – which is an Anglicized version of the Hebrew word, Moshiach.

"YaHoWaH" is the name of God in Hebrew, where it is written as four consonants (YHWH or YHVH, as the W and V is derived from the same Hebrew letter 'Vaw'). These four letters are called the Tetragrammaton (Greek for "[a word] having four letters"). Jews ceased to use the name in the Greco-Roman period, replacing it with the common noun Elohim ("God") to demonstrate the universal sovereignty of Israel's God over all others. At the same time, the divine name was increasingly regarded as too sacred to be uttered and was replaced in spoken ritual by the word Adonai ("My Lord"). From about the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Masoretes (Jewish scholars who were the first to add vowels to the text of the Hebrew Bible) used the vowel signs of the Hebrew words Adonai or Elohim as the vowels for YHWH; and later on the artificial name *Jehovah* was produced. Christian scholars and translators after the Renaissance and Reformation periods replaced the sacred name YHWH with GOD and LORD (all in capital letters in the Bible); which was a strategic move of Satan for not using the Name. The Sacred Name occurs 6,828 times in the Hebrew text of the Bible, demonstrating YHWH wants us to use it.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, biblical scholars again began to use the form Yahweh and it is now the conventional usage in biblical scholarship; but leading Hebrew Scholars suggest YHWH should be pronounced as Yah-oo-VaH (Y'shua is derived from YaH-shuvah which means YaH saves. Yah (יָהּ) is an abbreviation of God's name, YHWH, as seen in Psalm 68:4. The Name is also found in the word hallelu-YaH, which means "you praise the LORD").

# I want to obey Torah, but where and how do I start?

## Introduction

Many Christians have come to the persuasion to live Torah and want to willingly return to their roots and obey Torah out of love for YHWH. The question is how should they apply the "Old Covenant Law"? This is a very important question which more and more Hebrew Rooted Messianic Believers are also asking; Believers desiring to be Torah observant.

Obviously, Commands in the Mosaic Law<sup>1</sup> are very important, as seen in the previous booklets. Yet the Old Covenant contains many Laws that seem strange to modern readers; e.g., "*Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk*", Exod 34:26; "*Do not wear clothing woven of wool and linen*", Lev 19:19; "*Make tassels on the four corners of the cloak you wear*", Deut 22:12, etc.

Most Christians knowingly (and some unknowingly) violate a number of Old Covenant Laws with some regularity; e.g., "*Rise in the presence of the aged*", Lev 19:32; "*Not allowed to eat pig*", Deut 14:8, etc.

Furthermore, while Christians tend to ignore many Old Covenant laws, they embrace others (especially the Ten Commandments) as the moral underpinnings of Christian behaviour; e.g., "*Love your neighbor as yourself*", Lev 19:18; "*You shall not commit murder*", Exod 20:13; "*You shall not commit adultery*", Deut 5:18, etc.

Why do Christians adhere to some Laws and ignore others? Which ones are valid and which are not? Many Christians today make this decision based merely on whether a Law seems to be relevant. Surely this haphazard and existential approach to interpreting the Torah is inadequate. How then should Believers interpret the Law?

Before you even attempt to try to obey YHWH's Torah, beloved friend, you need to "understand" Torah – please make sure you first read the previous booklets in the series "CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONAL TEACHINGS".

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<sup>1</sup> The **Mosaic Law** is the ancient law of the Hebrews, attributed to Moses and contained in the Pentateuch, the first five Books in the Old Covenant also known as the Torah. Also called *Law of Moses*.

## Background

Many scholars believe that the distinctions between Moral, Civil, and Sacrificial Laws are critically important because this identification allows Believers to know whether a particular Law applies to them. Moral Laws and Civil Laws, according to this system of interpretation, are **universal and timeless**. They still apply as Law to all Believers and cannot be reasoned away.

Sacrificial Laws, on the other hand, applied to ancient Israel at the time the Tabernacle and Temple were functional, before Y'shua's First Coming and death. They do not apply presently to Believers based on the belief that Y'shua fulfilled all the Offerings from His death on the crucifixion stake. This we already refuted in *"Christian Foundational Teaching No 4: Your Covenant"*.

However, the approach to distinguish between the categories of the Laws has critical difficulties and does not reflect sound hermeneutical<sup>2</sup> methodology.

## The Classification of the Laws is not in the Scripture

Determining the differences between the Moral, Civil, and Sacrificial Laws are uninformed, as discussed previously. It is imposed on the text from outside the text. The Old Covenant itself gives no hint at all of any such differentiations. A good example is, *"love your neighbor as yourself"* (Lev 19:18) which is followed in the very next verse by the Law *"do not wear clothing woven of two kinds of material"* (verse 19).

The question that many ask concerning the classification is: should verse 18 be applied as binding, while verse 19 is dismissed as non-applicable to us altogether? The text gives no indication that any kind of hermeneutical shift has taken place between the two said verses. The problem arises that on what basis can we decide that one verse is **universal and timeless**, while the Law in the very next verse is rejected? Many of the so-called Moral, Civil, and Sacrificial Laws throughout Scripture occur together without any textual markers that there are differences between them; and what makes it even more difficult is that sometimes one Law can fall into two categories.

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<sup>2</sup> **Hermeneutics** is the study of interpretation theory, and can be either the art of interpretation, or the theory and practice of interpretation.

## One Law in more than one category

It is often difficult to conclude into which main category a particular mitzvah (Law/Instruction) falls, because the **Torah undoubtedly defines** the **covenant relationship** between YHWH and Israel. This covenantal relationship with Israel is by nature theological; and YHWH rules monotheistically<sup>3</sup>. All of the Torah has theological content and it was specially designed by YHWH this way.

### Can a Mitvah be Theological<sup>4</sup> but not moral<sup>5</sup>?

The question is: can a mitzvah be Theological but not moral?

Lev 19:19 states:

*Do not plant your field with two kinds of seed. Do not wear clothing woven of two kinds of material,*

But the central theme running throughout Leviticus is the holiness of YHWH – man therefore must strive to be holy. The discourse by YHWH in Leviticus 19 is preceded by the commandment:

*Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.*<sup>6</sup>

Part of this theme is the teaching that holy things must be kept separate from profane things. While the significance of these commands against mixing seed or mixing cloth material may not be fully understood, it is clear that they relate back to the holiness of YHWH; and therefore, the expectation from YHWH in that Israel His nation should be Holy (or separated from the nations) as well. In fact, all of the Levitical Mitzvot (Laws) regarding separation seem to relate to the **overarching principle of YHWH's holiness**; therefore, **separation is required** because of that holiness. How, then, can this Law not be moral as well?

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<sup>3</sup> Monotheism, from Greek monos, "single", and theos, "god" is the belief in the existence of one god or in the oneness of God

<sup>4</sup> The study of the nature of God and religious truth

<sup>5</sup> Pertaining to, or concerned with the principles or rules of right conduct or the distinction between right and wrong

<sup>6</sup> Lev 11:44

## The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments – the clearest examples of so-called Moral Laws, even present problems for the Moral, Civil, and Sacrificial distinctions.

Let's use the Fourth Commandment<sup>7</sup> as example: is the Shabbat mitzvah a Moral or Sacrificial (Ceremonial) Law, or both? Scholars want to erroneously apply various hard and fast rules to distinguish which category it falls into – rules such as:

- 1) If **content is the criterion**, then the Shabbat mitzvah (which was clearly part of Israel's worship system) is a **Ceremonial Law**.
- 2) But if **content is not the criterion** for distinctions, then the Shabbat mitzvah is a **Moral Law**.

Then Scholars go further to explain:

- 3) If the Shabbat mitzvah's **location** within the Ten Commandments is the **only criteria**, then it is **definitely only a Moral Law**; as the Ten Commandments are the core of the Moral Law. Based on this location criteria, then, there exists only a two-way category Law system:
  - a) The Ten Commandments, which are universal and timeless and which apply, then, to Believers as Moral Law as well.
  - b) The rest of the Laws which are not located in the Ten Commandments do not apply to Believers anymore as they are not Moral Laws.

This is totally unacceptable because these rules do not allow Believers to claim Lev 19:18, "*love your neighbor as yourself*" as the second greatest Commandment which Y'shua distinctly identified. To separate Lev 19:18 from the verses that surround it and to identify it as a Moral Law requires that **content** play the major role in the distinction and **not location**. If content becomes the criterion, then the Shabbat mitzvah ought to be classified as part of the Ceremonial.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten\\_Commandments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Commandments)

## A Valid Argument

Although many Christians **claim** that the Shabbat mitzvah is a Moral Law, very few actually obey it. If you go to shops or do any other work on the seventh day of the week, Saturday, you are not obedient to the Shabbat mitzvah. If Moshe was alive today he would definitely not have accepted the first day of the week when the pagans worshipped the sun as a substitute for YHWH's seventh day of rest. Obeying the Shabbat requirements of YHWH is much more involved than mere church attendance. Remember how we said that Leviticus is all about the holiness of YHWH? Well, the fact is that all of the Torah is about the holiness of YHWH; and also the requirements that He has for us to live holy lives, separate from the pagan nations. How do we know this?

Well, in Num 15:32–36 a man was immediately executed for gathering wood on the Sabbath, as YHWH said the Shabbat is holy for Him. In Deut 5:12-14, Israel is told to "*Observe the Shabbat day, to keep it holy.*" It is kept as a memorial of the Exodus in verse 15 and not just of YHWH's resting in creation (also Exod 12:16-17). So the differences between Civil, Ceremonial, and Moral Laws appear to be "random" and not textually based.

So Believers cannot use these haphazard distinctions to determine such a critically implicational issue.

## Legal Material Embedded in the Storyline Texts

The Old Covenant legal material does not appear in isolation. Instead, the Mosaic Law is firmly embedded in Israel's theological history. It is an integral part of the story that starts in Genesis 12 with the exodus before the Torah was officially given to Moshe at Mount Sinai, all the way to 2 Kings 25.

The Torah was not presented by itself, as some sort of disconnected code of behaviour. Rather the timeless universal Torah is presented as part of the theological history that describes how YHWH delivered Israel from Egypt and then settled them in the Promised Land as His wife. YHWH is the Bridegroom and Israel is the Bride. The Torah became their *lifestyle*. This is still the same today. Israel is still the Bride, and YHWH is still the Bridegroom. We have to **become Israel** in order to be in this marriage covenant!



## The Book of Exodus:

The section of main legal material in Exodus is recorded in chapters 20–23. This piece also contains the Ten Commandments. However, the storyline context of these chapters must be noted:

- The first nineteen chapters tell the story of the Israelites' bondage in Egypt and their deliverance by the mighty works of YHWH. This piece describes the call of Moshe and his powerful encounters with Pharaoh. It presents the story of the plagues on Egypt, culminating in the death of the Egyptian firstborn.
- Next Moshe led the Israelites out of Egypt and through the sea<sup>8</sup>. The narrative describes their journey in the desert until – in the third month (Sivan) after the Exodus – the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai, where YHWH called them into covenant relationship (Exodus 19). The Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 and the Laws that follow in Exodus 21–23 are part of this big story.

## The Book of Leviticus:

The Book of Leviticus is also sketched on a storyline canvas against what happened with Israel and her encounter with YHWH at Mount Sinai (Lev 26:46; 27:34). The Law in Leviticus is presented as part of a conversation between YHWH and Moshe. Such use of dialogue is a standard feature of the storyline.

- The Book begins, *"The Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting."* The phrase *"The Lord said to Moses"* occurs repeatedly throughout the Book.
- In addition, the Leviticus Book includes numerous "time sequence phrases" (an indication of storyline time movement) which is another characteristic of the narrative.

## The Book of Numbers:

The Book of Numbers (Num 1:1) continues with the story in the second year after the Exodus:

- It describes Israel's journeys and wanderings for the next forty years (Num 33:38).

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<sup>8</sup> "Reed" and not "Red Sea", which is a mistranslation in most Bibles. The Hebrew rendering is the "Sea of SuF", or Reed Sea, which gives a completely different picture of the crossing of the Children of Israel.

- Central to the Book is Israel's rejection of YHWH's promise in chapters 13 and 14. This disobedience resulted in the years of wandering in the wilderness as recorded in the Book. YHWH then presented Israel with additional Laws at various points during the story.

As in Exodus and Leviticus, the Laws in Numbers are securely tied into the storyline material.

The Book of Deuteronomy:

The storyline setting for the Book of Deuteronomy is the eleventh month (Shevat) of the fortieth year of the Exodus (Deut 1:3), just before Israel entered the Promised Land (Deut 1:1, 5).

- Israel had completed the forty years of wandering as a punishment for not trusting YHWH, refusing to enter the land and rebelling against His Word.
- Now a new generation had grown up. The generation, which was the mature generation that had made the decision not to enter the Promised Land, died out. YHWH gave this new generation a *restatement of the covenant* that He had made with their parents forty years earlier.
- Most of the Book of Deuteronomy consists of a series of instructions that Moshe delivered to Israel on YHWH's behalf.
- These instructions are connected to the storyline because they refer to the same time, place, and main characters as the storyline does.
- Also, the end of Deuteronomy contains some non-legal, storyline material – for example: a) the appointment of Joshua as leader (31:1–8), b) the song of Moshe (32:1–47), c) a blessing of Moshe on the tribes (33:1–29), and d) the death of Moshe (34:1–12).

It is also interesting to note that the events of Deuteronomy flow into the next book, Joshua, where the story continues without interruption.

Summary:

The **Torah** (Law) therefore is clearly part of the Pentateuchal<sup>9</sup> storyline and is **firmly embedded** into the **story** of Israel's:

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<sup>9</sup> First five Books in the Bible

- 1) exodus from Egypt,
- 2) wandering in the wilderness, and
- 3) occupation of the Promised land.

A person reading the Torah should make use of this approach to the Torah. Therefore, **connecting texts to their contexts** is a basic principle of **proper interpretive method**. The Torah is **part of a story**, and **this story** thus provides a critical context for **interpreting the Torah**.

By Definition: *"The method for interpreting Old Covenant Law should be similar to the method used in interpreting Old Covenant narrative, thus the Law is contextually part of the narrative"*.

With that as point of departure, let's have a look at our suggested approach to interpret the Torah.

### **Principlism, our suggested approach**

In harmony with sound Hebraic hermeneutics, it should be an approach that:

- a) is **consistent**, treating every single verse of Old Covenant Scripture as YHWH's Word,
- b) does not **depend** on the random non-textual categories such as the Moral Laws, Civil Laws and Sacrificial Laws,
- c) displays the **literary and historical context** of the Torah, placing it firmly into the storyline of the Pentateuch,
- d) reflects the **theological context** of the Law, and
- e) **corresponds** to the New Covenant's teachings of Messiah Y'shua, Sha'ul and the other authors.
- f) does not contradict other parts of Scripture; and more specifically, the Torah.

The approach that best integrates these criteria is referred to as **principlism**. We at HRTI have employed this approach as the method of choice in interpreting the Old Covenant Scriptures. The advantage of this approach is that it enables Torah students to be consistent when interpreting Old Covenant passages. There is **no need** to classify the Laws randomly into **applicable** and **non-applicable categories**. Each mitzvah should speak for itself!

This is not a theoretical approach, but rather a **practical method** that can be used by all Torah truth seekers, from scholars to students.

*It is fairly simple and consistent, which is its strength.*

*Its weakness is that it may tend to oversimplify some complex issues.*

There is room to refine and improve this approach. Nonetheless, it is a step forward from the traditional division of Law into random Moral, Civil, and Ceremonial categories; which is virtually impossible to do with all the 613 mitzvot.

Principlism then, as the approach to applying the Torah involve five steps:

### **1) Identify what the particular Law meant to the initial audience**

The first principle is to identify the **historical** and **literary context** of the specific mitzvah (Law) in question.

Here is a good question concerning the history:

- Were the Israelites **on the bank of the Jordan** preparing to enter the land (Deuteronomy) when the mitzvot was given, or
- Were they **at Mount Sinai** soon after the Exodus (Exodus, Leviticus)?

Further questions with reference to context:

- Was the Torah given in response to a **specific situation** that had arisen, or
- Was the command describing requirements for Israel **after they moved into the Promised Land**?

Valid questions that need to be asked:

- 1) What other laws are in the immediate context?
- 2) Is there a connection between them?
- 3) How did this particular Law relate to the Old Covenant?
- 4) Did it govern how people were to approach YHWH?
- 5) Did it govern how they were to relate to each other?
- 6) Did it relate to agriculture or commerce?
- 7) Was it specifically related to life in the Promised Land?
- 8) What did this specific Law mean for the Old Covenant audience?
- 9) Who was it specifically given to (men, women, Children of Israel, farmers, priests, etc.)?

- 10) Where was the Law to be obeyed (in the land, in your dwellings, etc.)?
- 11) How long is the Law to be obeyed (forever, only when you enter the land, etc.)?

## **2) Determine the differences between the initial audience and Believers of today**

Define the theological and **situational differences** between Believers today and the initial audience.

Believers today are not Israelites preparing to dwell in the Promised Land, nor do they approach YHWH through the Temple and its accompanying rituals. Also, Believers live under secular governments and not under a theocracy<sup>10</sup>, as did ancient Israel. In addition, Believers face pressures not from Canaanite religions but from different non-biblical worldviews and philosophies.

## **3) Develop universal principles from the text**

While the physical, simple instructions of Torah are to be obeyed – there are also timeless, universal principles behind each of the Mosaic commands for the believer today.

Each of the Old Covenant mitzvot had a meaning for its first audience; but that meaning is usually based on a broader, universal truth; a truth that is applicable to all YHWH's people – regardless of when they live and under which covenant they live.

In this step one asks:

- 1) What universal principle is reflected in this specific Law?
- 2) What broad principle may be applied today?

The principle should be developed in accord with several guidelines:

- a) It should be reflected in the text;
- b) it should be timeless;
- c) it should correspond to the theology of the rest of Scripture;
- d) it should not be culturally bound; and

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<sup>10</sup> **Theocracy** is a form of government in which a god or deity is recognized as the state's supreme civil ruler; or in a higher sense, a form of government in which a state is governed by immediate divine guidance or by officials who are regarded as divinely guided

- e) it should be relevant to both Old and current New Covenant Believers.

These universal principles will often be related directly to the **character of YHWH and His holiness**, the **nature of sin**, the **issue of obedience** or **concern for other people**.

#### **4) Compare the principle with the New Covenant teaching**

Filter the universal principle through the New Covenant teaching regarding that principle or regarding the specific mitzvah being studied.

The bulk of the Old Covenant's Laws, for example, are restated in the New Covenant as instructions for the New Covenant Believers. Y'shua, Sha'ul and the other New Covenant authors simply expand on an Old Covenant mitzvah.

For example, the command in Exod 20:14, "*You shall not commit adultery*", the universal principle relates to the sanctity of marriage and the need for faithfulness in marriage. As this principle is filtered through the New Covenant, Y'shua's teaching on the subject must be incorporated into the principle. Y'shua said, "*But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart*"<sup>11</sup> – thereby expanding the range of this specific mitzvah.

He applied it not only to *acts* of adultery but also to *thoughts* of adultery. Therefore, the commandment for Believers today becomes, "*You shall not commit adultery in act or in thought*", thus obeying the physical, fleshly, initial command as well as the universal (or spiritual) principal behind the mitzvah.

Therefore, Believers should seek to willingly obey this command because it reflects a universal biblical principle of YHWH reinforced by the New Covenant; and not simply because it is an "Old Testament Law". It also makes it clear that YHWH requires us to be holy and to not act as the pagan nations act, but to be separate from them. Thinking about today's divorce rate, you can clearly see why this is considered "being holy (separate)".

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<sup>11</sup> Matt 5:28

## 5) Apply the universal principle to life today

In this step, the universal principle developed in the previous step is applied in Believers' lives today.

Lev 5:2 provides an example of how the method of applying principles can be used by Believers today to apply legal passages. The verse reads:

*Or if a person touches anything ceremonially unclean—whether the carcasses of unclean wild animals or of unclean livestock or of unclean creatures that moves along the ground—even though he is unaware of it, he has become unclean and is guilty.*

The approach simply classifies these verses as a Ceremonial Law that no longer applies to Believers today because these Laws had to do with Temple purification and we have no Temple. While there is no Temple today and we are all "ritually unclean" in any case, we should still desire to keep these mitzvot as they are part of YHWH's Torah; and therefore again, relates to His holiness and our holiness in turn. This said, using the applied principles approach, one could interpret and apply this text in the same manner as one would the narrative.

The action required to correct one's ceremonially unclean status in this verse is described in a few verses later. So verses 5–6 should also be included:

*When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned and, as a penalty for the sin he has committed, he must bring to the Lord a female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.*

The applied principles approach is as follows:

### ***What did the text mean to the initial audience?***

The context of Leviticus discusses how Israel was to live with the holy, awesome Elohim who was dwelling in their midst. How were they to approach YHWH? How should they deal with sin and unclean things in light of YHWH's presence among them? These verses are part of the literary context of 4:1–5:13 that deal with offerings necessary after *unintentional sin*.

Leviticus 4 deals primarily with the leaders and Leviticus 5 focuses on common people. Leviticus 5:2 informed Israel that if they touched any unclean thing (dead animals or unclean animals), they were defiled ceremonially.

This was true even if they touched an unclean thing accidentally. They were unable to approach YHWH and worship Him, being unclean. To be purified (made clean), they were to confess their sin and bring the Priest a lamb or a goat for a sacrifice (5:5–6). The Priest would sacrifice the animal on their behalf and they would be clean again, able to approach and worship YHWH.

***What are the differences between the initial audience and Believers today?***

Believers cannot currently sacrifice/offer animals as in the days when there still was a Temple. Furthermore, Y'shua's sacrifice was for unintentional sin, as already discussed in our previous booklets. Therefore, our sin offering for unintentional sin has already been brought to the altar, and offered to YHWH as a sin/trespass offering. For this reason, sin/trespass offerings are no longer required from an atonement point of view, as our sins have already been atoned for. If we do offer today (had there been a Temple), we would only offer for remembrance and celebrations, not for atonement.

Remember, this only applies to unintentional sin. Intentional sin does not require sacrifice, as there never was a sacrifice for intentional sin. Intentional sin requires humbling yourself, and repenting in front of YHWH.

***What is the universal principle in this text?***

The central universal principle in these verses relates to the concept that YHWH is holy. When He dwells among His people, His holiness demands that they keep separate from sin and unclean things. If they become unclean, they must be purified by a blood sacrifice. This principle takes into account the overall theology of Leviticus and the rest of Scripture. It is expressed in a form that is universally applicable to YHWH's people in both the Old and the New Covenant eras.



## ***How does the New Covenant teaching modify or qualify this principle?***

According to the New Covenant, YHWH no longer dwells among Believers by residing in the movable Tabernacle or a fixed Temple; He now dwells within a new Temple (the Believers themselves) by the indwelling Ruach HaKodesh<sup>12</sup>. His presence, however, still calls for holiness on their part.

He demands that they not sin and that they stay separate from unclean things. While many believe that the New Covenant redefines the terms "clean" and "unclean", this is not accurate. Let's investigate.

*Y'shua says: "Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.' ... What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean'".<sup>13</sup>*

The above is from Mark 7. However, if we read the same story in Matthew chapter 15, we see an additional verse added:

*20 These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.*

Y'shua does not redefine what is clean and unclean. He is merely answering the question posed by the Pharisees in the beginning of the chapter (Mark 7). They asked why His disciples don't wash their hands according to the tradition of the elders. He responded by explaining that the eating with unwashed hands does not defile a man. He meant the spiritual principals behind the mitzvah, not food or what you touch. Drinking poison would do nothing to you if he meant food – as many claim; neither would eating poisonous plants or animals. No, my dear friend, Y'shua was explaining the spiritual principle here. He said that these things defile your spirit, while the things explained by Moshe defile your flesh. Both need to be taken into consideration and both adhered to.

The New Covenant deals continuously with sin and uncleanness. Rather than bringing a lamb or goat to atone for sin, a Believer's sins are covered

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<sup>12</sup> Holy Spirit

<sup>13</sup> Mark 7:15, 20–23

at the moment of salvation by the sacrifice of Y'shua. The death of Y'shua washes away sin and changes the Believer's status from unclean to clean.

Unintentional sin must be confessed and repented of when it is found out, as per the Torah. This is covered by Y'shua's death until the day when you find out that you sinned unintentionally. This is the pattern found in Leviticus chapter 1 through 6, which details the Temple sacrifices – all for unintentional sin.

**Confession of sin** is still important under the New Covenant (1 John 1:9) as it was under the Old Covenant.

So an expression of the **universal principle** for today's New Covenant audience would be, *"Stay away from sinful actions, impure thoughts, and unclean things as described in Torah; because the holy Elohim lives within you. If you do commit unclean acts or think unclean thoughts or touch unclean things, then confess that sin and repent of it (repentance means to turn away with a sincere intention to not sin again – while we can and do fail, our sincerest intentions should be to not sin again), and experience forgiveness through the death of Y'shua."*

***How should Believers today apply this universal principle in their lives?***

There are many possibilities, but one specific application relates to Internet pornography.

Many Believers now have easy access to pornographic material in the privacy of their homes. This text teaches that the holiness of YHWH, who dwells within Believers, demands that they lead clean lives. Viewing pornography clearly falls into the category what the New Covenant says is unclean. Such action is a violation of YHWH's holiness and it hinders one's ability to worship or fellowship with YHWH. Therefore, Believers are to stay away from Internet and all other types of pornography; realizing that it makes them spiritually unclean, offends the holiness of YHWH, and disrupts fellowship with YHWH.

However, if one does fall into this sin, he/she must confess it, repent of it and through the death of Y'shua he will be forgiven and fellowship with YHWH will be restored.

## Facts Established

- To **deliberately** divide the Mosaic Law **into boxes** of Civil, Ceremonial, and Moral Laws **violates proper hermeneutical method** for it is **inconsistent** and **arbitrary**, and the Old Covenant **gives no hint** of such distinctions.
- By purposely dividing the Mosaic Law into Civil, Ceremonial, and Moral Laws creates **errors in two ways**.
  - On the one hand, it **dismisses the Civil and Ceremonial Laws** as inapplicable; however, we know that the Ceremonial Laws are not required to be done any more due to the fact that is there no Temple – but their principles are still firmly intact.
  - On the other hand dividing the Mosaic Law into Civil, Ceremonial, and Moral Laws **applies** the so-called **Moral Laws as direct Law**.
- In addition, dividing the Mosaic Law into Civil, Ceremonial, and Moral Laws tends to **ignore the storyline context** and the **covenant context** of the Old Covenant's legal material.
- The **inner motive of the heart** and the **Torah** goes hand in hand; meaning, it does not help if your heart is pure and you neglect the Torah; or, what does it help you to observe all the Torah Laws and your heart is not pure?
- Believers are mistaken to believe that **first there was the Law** and then it was **replaced by Grace**. Exodus tells you clearly that it was first grace. In His great mercy, the blood had to be applied to the door posts for Israel to obtain redemption in Egypt; and only fifty days later He issued the Law as the people needed guidance. Today the "Church" disregards the Law and you can see the mess they are in because of no guidance!

## Closing Thoughts

Principlism seeks to find universal principles in the Old Covenant's legal material and to apply these principles to Believers today. This approach is more consistent than the "dividing" one, and it is more reflective of sound hermeneutical method. It also allows Believers to see that **all Scripture** is *"useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness"*<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> 2 Tim 3:16

Something mind-boggling is happening right now before our eyes!  
What can only be seen as a sovereign work of the Ruach HaKodesh is breaking forth as Christians around the world are working to **return** to their **historical Hebrew foundation**. After being **stained** for more than eighteen centuries by Judaeophobia, anti-Judaism, and anti-Semitism, many Christians are being impacted by an unprecedented revolution of restoration. Scholars, clergy, and laity from virtually every nationality, ethnicity, and denomination are reconnecting their faith in Messiah Y'shua with its historical Hebraic Roots in the **Torah**. **HalleluYAH**

### **We inform – You choose**<sup>15</sup>

Never be guilty of: "**By your traditions you make the Word of God of non effect**"<sup>16</sup>

*As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Prov 25:25*  
Thank you that we may minister to you from the Southern point of Africa – population ratio-wise the largest group of Messianic Judaism followers in the world.

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That 'narrow way' is the path of Torah,  
which is the mission of the Believer...  
to continuously direct you to the Crucifixion Stake.

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<sup>13</sup> The truth of the Torah makes you see the mistranslations in the New Covenant. It's amazing how you can look at the epistles of Rabbi Paul one way and it looks like he's leading the body of Messiah away from Torah; when in reality, he's leading them **to** Torah. A paradox of vantage point. Let us remember, the intent of the law maker constitutes the law. We need to walk a mile or two in our Hebrew Messiah's shoes

<sup>16</sup> **Matt 15:3** *But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?* **Matt 15:6** *And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.* **Mark 7:9** *And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition*

*"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things,  
you develop the habit in little matters of Torah.*

***Excellence is not an exception,  
it is a prevailing attitude."***

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