

Finding Rest In The Ancient Paths Of Yeshua's Yoke

by Pastor Norm Franz

As the world approaches the crossroads of eternity, God is calling us to return to His ancient paths which is where we find rest for our souls:

“This is what the Lord says: ‘Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.’” (Jer. 6:16 ^{NIV})

The term “*ancient paths*” is a Hebraism that refers to the eternal ways of God that are only found in His Torah. Consequently, as we approach the end of the age and the return of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus), God is calling us to search out the ways of Torah, where we find His manifest rest for our souls.

Yeshua made a direct reference to finding God’s rest in the ancient paths of Torah when He said, “*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me...and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*” (Matt. 11:29-30). In Judaism, a yoke refers to the individual teachings and applications of God’s Torah that were taught by different rabbis and schools of theological thought.

For example, those who were discipled under Jeremiah’s ministry would be under his ‘yoke’ (teaching and application of Torah). *(Continue on page 2)*

Lift Up Your Soul And Trust In The Lord

On August 7, 2010, the Lord gave me a prophetic word that said a new season of global shaking was coming on the world. He said it would cause all civil, political, financial, family and religious order to be lost. He also told us to return to Him and prepare ourselves in spirit, soul and body.

Five months later (January 2011), the Arab spring erupted throughout the Arab world. Since that time, the nations have experienced an unprecedented breakdown in world order.

In 2010, the Lord also started giving us annual themes to focus our attention on that gave us direction for the year. As I sought the Lord for this year’s direction, I felt He was showing me that the nations would see a ramped up loss of world order. He reiterated something I have shared before which is, like Noah’s flood, this loss of order was coming and nothing was going to stop it...NOT EVEN President Trump.

In light of this, He made it clear to me that all of our physical preparation would be for naught if we did not focus on Him. When I sought Him for what He wanted us to focus on next, He emphasized that our primary focus should be... [See Hebraic Perspectives](#)

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Timothy sat under the Apostle Paul's teaching, therefore he was under Paul's 'yoke.' Those who sat under Peter's ministry took on Peter's yoke, and so on. Hence, when Yeshua told us to take on His yoke because "[it was] *easy and His burden was light*," He was not saying that we've been set free from God's written Law (Torah and Commandments), but we are to come under His interpretation and application of Torah.

We know this to be true, because the LORD tells Moses, "*this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you...But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it*" (Deut. 30:11-14). Likewise, in the Brit Hadashah (New Covenant), the Apostle John uses this "ancient path" as his theological foundation when he says, "*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome*" (1 John 5:3).

Consequently, in Matthew 11, Yeshua was clearly addressing those who were "*burdened and heavy laden*" under the legalistic 'yoke' of the Pharisees, who had developed thousands of manmade oral laws and traditions which they taught were equal to the written Law [Torah] of Moses. This is what Paul was referring to when he told the Galatians "*stand firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery*" (Gal. 5:1). He wasn't referring to the written Torah (Law) of Moses, but the legalistic oral laws and commandments of Pharisaic Judaism.

For example, one of those manmade laws was that people "*do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders*" (Mark 7:3). Washing our hands before we eat or handle food is a very good idea (just ask my wife). However, it is not one of God's Torah-based written commandments that produces sin if we do not wash our hands. Consequently, when the Pharisees tried to condemn the disciples for not obeying their manmade law (tradition) to wash before they ate, Yeshua quotes Isaiah 29:13 as a rebuke for their legalism saying:

"Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN... you are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your traditions'" (Mark 7:6-9).

We see another example of this when Yeshua healed people on the Sabbath for which the Pharisees accused Him of breaking the Law (Torah). Unfortunately for them, there is no commandment in Scripture that commands us not to heal on the Sabbath. This was one of the manmade laws they developed, because they had lost God's primary purpose for His Torah which is the preservation of life. Jesus points this out to the scribes and the Pharisees when He asked them, "*is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to destroy it?*" but they would not answer him (Luke 6:9).

In another incident, He reiterates this 'ancient path' when He asks, "*Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?*" (Luke 14:5). In other words, we are God's children and when one of us is sick it is the same as one of our children falling into a well. His point is that, just as we would do good and pull our child out of the well on the Sabbath, God does good by healing on the Sabbath.

Yeshua presents this same 'yoke' of doing good vs. harm on Sabbath in Matthew 12:11-13 and Mark 4:3-5. Unfortunately, in each case the Pharisees went out from those Sabbath meetings and planned how they might "*do harm*" to Him. Sadly, the legalistic spirit of manmade religion so hardened their hearts, they could not see how they were putting their traditions above God's Torah.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments and His commandments are not burdensome."

— 1 John 5:3

Do Not Add To Or Take Away From Torah

In Torah, God says, “*you shall not add to nor take away from [His commandments]*” (Deut. 4:2; 12:32). King Solomon reasserts the principle saying, “*Do not add to His words or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar*” (Pr. 30:6). He is telling us that there are consequences for altering His Word. In the prophets, God describes any distortion of His Word as “*doing violence to My Law*” (Ez. 22:26; Zeph. 3:4).

In His sermon on the mount, Yeshua labels this type of perversion as “*destroying the Law.*” He goes on to point out the eternal nature of Torah saying, “*until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law [Torah] until all is fulfilled.*” Then, He announces the positive and negative consequences for what we teach about His commandments when He says, “*Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, 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*” ([Matt. 5:17-19](#)).

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul tells us that Yeshua gave him the direct revelation that separates God’s written Torah from the manmade oral laws and traditions of Pharisaic Judaism ([Gal. 1:11-17](#)). From this, we can understand why Paul tells the church at Colossae to not follow the commandments and traditions of men, but the commandments and traditions of God:

“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ...If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees...in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion” (Col. 2:8-23).

Paul makes it clear that the commandments and teachings he is telling us to forsake is NOT a reference to the commandments and teachings of God’s Torah, but to the legalistic *philosophies* and *traditions* of manmade religion. Paul also ties these manmade laws into Jewish mysticism when he tells Titus, “*For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth*” (Titus 1:13-14). This perversion of Scripture is the basis of the anti-Torah, Gnostic teaching of the Nicolaitans that false prophets and teachers brought into the first century church ([2 Pet. 2:1-3](#)), which continues in today’s church through the teachings of Balaam and Jezebel ([Rev. 2:14-20](#)).

In other words, for centuries, the Western Church has totally destroyed Paul’s condemnation of man’s legalistic traditions and doctrines of self-made religion by applying that condemnation to God’s Torah and Commandments. Consequently, their destruction of God’s Word has become part of what both Yeshua and Paul condemned.

God’s Encouragement and Warning

It is also important to note that the last instruction God’s messenger gives us in the Book of Revelation is the warning, “*if anyone adds to the words of this book, God will add to him the plagues which are written in [that] book; and if anyone takes away from the words of [that] book of prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in [that] book*” (Rev. 22:18-19).

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you”

— 2 Pet. 2:1

In other words, the last revelation in the last book of the Bible reinforces our need to study God’s word in the context of His word, so that we do not come under the heavy legalistic yoke of manmade laws that add to and take away from God’s word. Consequently, as we return to the easy yoke of Torah the way Yeshua taught it, the more we will find rest for our souls. ✨

“Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Return to Me,’” declares the Lord of hosts, “that I may return to you,” says the Lord of hosts.

— Zechariah 1:3

Updated from an article published in the Second Quarter 2018 edition of TER

The Elijah Report

TER is published by Ascension Ministries International (AMI). Editor and Publisher: Norm Franz, Associate Editors: Deborah Franz, Ken Graham and Deborah Hargrove.

TER publishes factual information that is related to Bible prophecy and events that mark the end of the age and the return of Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah. Information and opinions are designed to prepare the way of the Lord and to make ready God’s people for His coming ([Mal. 4:4-6](#); [Luke 1:17](#)).

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THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD.’”

—Isaiah 40:3

Scripture tells us that, in the last days, God is going to release the forerunner spirit of Elijah upon His people to prepare the way of Messiah’s return. This anointing calls the Body of Messiah out of the Babylonian world system and guides them back to the ancient paths of God’s Torah (Mal. 4:4-6; Jer. 6:16). This awakening brings the “restoration of all things” and releases Yeshua (Jesus) to return for His bride, who has made herself ready (Luke 1:16-17; Rev. 19:7-8). The Elijah Report is part of that end time voice crying in the wilderness, and we hope you will join us. Shalom!

“It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah...so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

— Luke 1:17