

Beginner's Torah Lesson #6: How the "Church" went Wrong!

Greek Dualism verses Hebrew Unity

By Rabbi Edward Levi Nydle- B'nai Avraham

"But YOU, speak what is fitting for sound teaching." **Titus 2:1**

This is the sixth Torah lesson and a very advanced lesson for the student. I pray you will study it with an open heart and mind to gain a greater understanding of the Hebraic mind-set. I have tried to provide enough Scripture and resource documentation to support what this teaching is presenting to the student of the Torah. One of the biggest challenges we have faced in proclaiming the Two House Truth is that fact that "Christians" are totally ignorant of "church" history and the major players in the reinterpretation game played with the Hebrew *TaNak* and the *Brit Chadasha* (Renewed Covenant). They have no knowledge of the influence of the Greek philosophical schools and the Hellenists on the Yehudim and the early "church fathers". They believe "Christians" have always lived, believed, and interpreted the Scriptures as they do today. The purpose of this lesson is to unmask the influence of the Greek-mindset on the "church fathers".

How did the "church" go wrong in its interpretation of the Scriptures that resulted in the severing of the TRUE FAITH from its Hebraic roots? Why has it corrupted the ancient belief that our Rebbe Yahshua and His talmidim taught to Yisrael? What is the difference between Greek thought and Hebraic thought? How has it affected our thinking and our interpretation of the Scriptures? I hope to help you, as the student of Torah, to answer this dilemma by this teaching from the Scriptures and other sources of historical importance.

Rav Shaul instructed his student Timothy:

- "But you, stay in what you learned and trusted, having known from whom you have learned, and that from a babe you have known the Set-Apart Scriptures (the Torah), which are able to make you wise for deliverance (salvation) through belief in Moshiach Yahshua." **2 Tim.3: 14-15.**

Rav Shaul also admonished Timothy to entrust the words he had learned and heard to men who were competent to teach the Torah:

- **2 Tim.2: 2,** "And what you have heard from me among many witnesses, ENTRUST these to TRUSTWORTHY men who shall be competent to teach others as well."

This admonition is a pure rabbinical practice to pass the teachings you have received and learned from your Master or rabbi on to your personal students. This is exactly what our Rebbe Yahshua HaMoshiach did with His 12 *talmidim*. He spent time with them in order to correctly impart His Torah and *Halakah* to them as His disciples or students.

- The school of Hillel taught, "One ought to teach every man, for there were many sinners in Israel who were drawn to the study of Torah, and from them descended righteous, pious, and worthy folk."
- In the **Wisdom of the Fathers** we read, "Provide thyself with a teacher, get thee a comrade..."
- Simon the Just said, "Let your house be a meeting house for the wise [in Torah]; sit amidst in the dust of their feet, and drink their words with thirst."
- "And she [Martha] had a sister called Miriam, who SAT AT THE FEET OF YAHSHUA and HEARD HIS WORD." **Luke 10:39**

We know from Scripture that Timothy's father was a Greek and his mother was from Yehudah. He had been taught the Torah in his home from a youthful age, as the *Brit Chadasha* did not exist at that time.

Rav Shaul, knowing full well that Moshiach had come, still gave Timothy the charge or instruction to impart to future generations of Yahshua's *talmidim* sound Torah doctrine and teachings. This means Timothy, as Rav Shaul's student would teach them from the Hebraic mind-set of the Torah and the fathers. He was not to teach any doctrines contrary to what He learned in the Torah of Yahweh.

Over the last 2000 years, what has been called the “church” left the original Yisraelite Olive Tree and cut itself off from the Semitic culture that was prevalent in the *ekklesia* of Yahshua from the beginning. Rav Shaul tells us this is because of UNBELIEF (**Romans 11:17-24**). The so-called “church fathers” did not heed the exhortation that Rav Shaul gave to Timothy to continue in what they had learned from the beginning which was the Torah taught in the context of Hebraic thought. The Believers in Yahshua as the Moshiach became more and more Hellenized and were led away by strange teachings (Ivrim-**Hebrews 13:9**) as Greek thought crept into the congregations. A Greek spirit entered into the Body of Moshiach and the result was the birth of heretical teachings based upon Greek philosophical teaching rather than the Torah of Yahweh. That fact they left the Hebraic thought patterns and the Torah left them vulnerable to these doctrines of demons and anti-Torah theology of the Greeks. When the Body of Moshiach (Yisrael) left its roots, then a new religion “Christianity” was birthed out of the womb of Greek thought and culture. It became a religion separate from the Torah based belief of Yahshua and the original Good News proclaimed by His talmidim. It was a religion ABOUT Yahshua, but not the religion OF Yahshua! Rav Shaul gave many warnings to the congregations that this would happen:

- **Galatians 1:8**: “However, even if we, or a messenger out of heaven, bring a Good News to you beside what we announced to you, let him be accursed.”
- **1 Timothy 4:1**: “But the Spirit distinctly says that in LATTER TIMES some shall FALL AWAY from THE belief, paying attention to MISLEADING spirits, and teachings of demons.”

Because we have not heeded Rav Shaul’s warnings in the Scriptures we are still reaping the harvest of that separation (**Gal.6: 7-8**) from the Olive Tree of Yisrael and the Torah. We are now faced with the dilemma of people are trying to read and understand a Hebraic book through Greek culture and thought. This Greek viewpoint is so entrenched in the minds of people that unless we pull out the ROOT, it will continue to bear fruit and reproduce tares among the wheat (**Matt.13: 24-30**).

- “Leave them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into a ditch.”
Mattithyahu 15:14

The tragic result has been a “spiritual schizophrenia” in the Body of Moshiach. There is an unholy MIXTURE (*shatnetz*) of trying to combine the Greek and Hebraic thought patterns into one “new” religion. There are three main areas that need immediate correction in order for the Body to return to the true faith once delivered to the set-apart ones by the TRUE FATHERS OF THE FAITH- THE *TALMIDIM* OF REBBE YAHSHUA HAMOSHIACH (**Yehudah-Jude 3**).

ECHAD not Dualism

First, we must begin to view ourselves in terms of a total unity or *ECHAD*. Greek thinking is dualistic in nature. It comes from the Greek philosophers like Plato. Platonism believes in a duality of worlds: the material and the immaterial, spiritual world. It views this material world as inferior to the immaterial and therefore it is evil and corrupted.

- **The Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary**: **dualism**: “a theory that considers reality to consist of two irreducible elements or modes... A doctrine that the universe is under the dominion of two opposing principles one of which is good and the other evil.b. A view of man as constituted of two irreducible elements.”
- **The Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary**: **irreducible**. “Impossible to bring into a desired, normal, or simpler state.”

Plato believed that the human soul had its origin in the heavens and therefore longed to return to that celestial realm called “heaven”. The human soul needed a release from the body to be truly FREE. The two (body and soul) could never be reconciled in a total unit once again. The soul was viewed as set-apart while the body or material was corrupted and incapable of being reconciled to the purity of the soul. The body was viewed as a prison for the soul and salvation could not be experienced until the death of the body. The soul then escapes the body and flies away to heaven into the realm of the spirits to live forever in a life of bliss free from this evil and corrupt world.

We must make careful note that the father of “Christian” thought, Origen, was an avid student of Plato in the Alexandrian school.

- **The Funk and Wagnall's New Encyclopedia Vol.19 page 441:** “ He [Origen] taught the principle of the threefold sense, corresponding to the threefold division of the person into body, spirit, and soul, which was then a common concept. He was a PLATONIST and ENDEAVORED TO COMBINE GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.”
- **The New Unger's Bible Dictionary page 44:** Alexandria, “In the third century A.D., the city became an important center of Christianity as a result of the work of Clement and ORIGEN. During the fourth century both the heretical leader Arius and the great Orthodox theologian Athanasius came from Alexandria. It was also a great center for the production of the copies of the Scriptures, and several NT manuscripts evidently were produced there.”
- **Funk and Wagnall's New Encyclopedia Vol.21 page 73-74:** “Plato's impact upon Jewish thought is apparent in the work of the 1st century Alexandrian philosopher Philo Judaeus. Neoplatonism (q.v.), founded by the 3rd century philosopher Plotinus, and was an important later development of Platonism. The theologians Clement of ALEXANDRIA, ORIGEN, and St. Augustine were early Christian exponents of a platonic perspective, and Platonic ideas have had a crucial role in the development of Christian theology, Medieval Islam thought also was strongly influenced by Plato.”
- **The Jewish Encyclopedia Vol.1 pages 364-366:** “The philosophers whose views were accepted by a few of the highly educated Jews were PLATO, Aristotle, and the Stoics. Under such influence the Jews of Alexandria produced extensive and varied literature... Among the less intelligent, Jewish and pagan witchcraft joined hands, as did Jewish faith and GREEK PHILOSOPHY among the more enlightened. This blending of religious ideas prevailed more or less wherever Jews and gentiles came in direct contact, but was especially strong and marked in Alexandria.”
- **Christianity Through the Ages by Earle Cairns page 262:** “They (the humanists) studied the Biblical documents in the original tongues as much as or more than they studied the writings of PLATO or Aristotle... They were more interested in man as a human being WITH a soul than they were in him as a rational creature... Marsilio (Ficino) translated Plato's writings into LATIN from 1463-1477. These HUMANISTS wished to integrate the Bible with GREEK PHILOSOPHY, PARTICULARLY THAT OF PLATO.”

The Greek philosophy influenced not only the early Believers in Yahshua through those from the nations (Ephraim), but also filtered into the assemblies through the Greek/Hellenistic Yehudim that came to belief in Yahshua as the Moshiach (**Acts 6:1; Acts 9:29**). Hellenists were Yehudites that spoke and lived culturally as GREEKS. We find that *ANTINOMIANISM* (opposition to the Torah) actually helped some “church fathers” believe in this dualistic thought of the Greeks.

- **The Jewish Encyclopedia Vol.1 page 631:** “...the Gnostic Marcion (who taught in ROME around 150 CE) whose DUALISM, unlike that of the other Gnostics, is not the cause but the RESULT, of his pronounced antinomianism. Marcion proceeds from the strong Pauline antithesis: Law and Gospel, wrath and grace, works and faith, flesh and spirit, sin and righteousness, death and life; and these opposites seem irreconcilable, he arrives at the DUALISTIC doctrine of the just and angry [Elohim] of the OT, and the [Elohim] of the Gospels who is only love and mercy [sounds like most “churches today doesn't it? Rabbi Ed]... The influence exerted by antinomianism on the conduct of life proved to be of a two-fold nature; while Marcion and Tatian were led by it to extreme ASCETICISM, with the Gnostics it resulted in libertine practices.. Especially notorious in this regard were the Nikolatians...” [see **Rev.2:15**]

Marcion was heavily influenced by the dualistic thinking of Plato and Gnosticism. He believed the world was created by an evil Demiurge (a term the Gnostics borrowed from Platonism) who was a “god” of battle and demanded bloody sacrifices of animals to satisfy his anger. Marcion believed this “god” was revealed in the pages of the TaNaK. He viewed the TaNaK as an inferior book and an antithesis of the “NEW TESTAMENT”. He insisted the “NEW” revealed the true “god” in the “Christ” and was a “god” of love and mercy. Marcion exalted the writings of “Paul” and held that “Christians” were “free from the law”. He was believed that the “church” was wrong in trying to combine “Christianity” with Judaism. He held one supreme goal in his thoughts and motives- to rid Christianity of TRACE of Judaism. He became the archenemy of the “Jew's Elohim-Yahweh!” His doctrines are alive and well today in the Neo-Marcionism of the “church”. See “The Ghost of Marcion” at www.yourarmstoisrael.org.

So we can see how dualism brought about the concept we know today as the “Old Testament” and the “New Testament” as two different covenants or books that are irreducible. We view the “New” as superior and taking the place of the “Old”.

The Hebraic mind sees the Scriptures (the *TaNak* and the Renewed Covenant) as ONE-*ECHAD* book given to Yisrael not a separate entity called the “church”. The *Brit Chadasha* is a RENEWAL of the previous covenant made with BOTH Yehudah and the House of Yisrael (Ephraim) according to **Yirmeyahu 31:31-40**.

Hebraic /Scriptural thought viewed the world as good, even though it was fallen and needed redemption, Yahweh, who called it good, had created it (**Bereshith-Genesis 1:31**). Therefore, Yahweh had created the world for man and for his good. This was to be his habitation or home. It was IN THE WORLD that man could fellowship, commune, worship, and serve Yahweh. There was no dualism to the Hebrew mind. The body and soul were ONE single unity, as were the material and immaterial worlds. The Yisraelite was called to serve Yahweh with his whole being which included his heart, soul, and might. It was within THIS world where he could obey and perform the mitzvot. He COULD have his body (flesh) obey his soul’s desire to please Yahweh by the Torah. Through the *mitzvot* he could develop and improve his soul as he performed the commands in obedience (**Philippians 2:5-16**). He could make an impact on his world IN THE NOW of life! To the Hebrew, through observance of the commandments in the Torah he would be involved in pulling the “spiritual” DOWN to the earth into the world of his work and social interaction, so that the pursuit of them no longer were a distraction to him in his pursuit of Yahweh, but it became a full part of them. This is the Scriptural pattern or *tabnit*. His pursuit of material goods and his social life was not to detract from his pursuit of Yahweh, but to be an integrated into that pursuit of spirituality.

The Hebrew liturgy and *Siddur* would NOT have included the singing of the popular hymns such as –“I’ll fly away”, “Heaven is sounding sweeter all the time” or “I got a mansion just over the hilltop” by the early Believers in Yahshua. This type of Platonic thinking was ridiculous and absurd and viewed as a cop-out to their responsibilities to serve Yahweh in the here and now. Their songbook was the Tehillim (Psalms).

Their desires were not focused upon the future life, but learning how to serve Yahweh and their fellow man in the here and now with the knowledge they were accountable before Yahweh for their works done in His Name.

Yahshua Himself told many parables about stewardship of what Yahweh had given you (**Luke 12:42; 16:1-8**). A steward (*oikonomos* Greek) was a manager, overseer, or administrator of a HOUSEHOLD or estate. This is exactly what Yahweh gave Adam over the earth at creation. The Tehillim tell of Yahweh as *Melek* (King) over ALL the earth but also the earth was given to man as a home and inheritance. This is the Hebraic tension in thinking. Romans tells us the culmination of the promise to our father Avraham was the WHOLE EARTH (**Romans 4:13**). He and his seed were to inherit it from Father Yahweh (**Gal.3: 16-29**). This is mind staggering to even comprehend!

Two Heresies

Dualistic Greek thought brought about the heresies of asceticism and Gnosticism. Asceticism is a life-style where all fleshly pleasures are to be forsaken as evil and appealing to the flesh. One must learn to restrain oneself from them and mortify the flesh according to this doctrine. There were man-made dietary restrictions, seclusion into monasteries, forfeiting of all possessions, vows of celibacy and silence, and other man-made doctrines (**1 Tim.4: 1-5; Col.2: 8, 21**). The Gnostics taught that one gained salvation in escaping the body by esoteric or hidden knowledge (it comes from the Greek word-gnosis, which means knowledge). They also practiced asceticism in order to flee the evils of the world. Both these ideas have their origins in Greek dualistic thought.

- ASCETIC **Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary**: adj. GREEK asketikos, lit.laborious 1. Practicing strict self-denial; as a measure of personal and esp. spiritual discipline 2.auster in appearance, manner, or attitude.
- **The Jewish Encyclopedia Vol.2, pages 165-166**: Asceticism: “It is thus seen that both the term and the IDEA which the term expresses are of non-Jewish origin and implications. Judaism cannot be said to encourage Asceticism, even in the restricted sense of discipline...At all events Judaism is a temper which is fatal to asceticism; and the history of both Judaism and the Jews is, on the whole, free from ascetic aberrations...the appeal to mortify the flesh for the sake of pleasing Heaven could not find voice in the synagogue...Asceticism is indigenous to the religions which posit as fundamental the wickedness of this life and the corruption under sin of the flesh. Buddhism, therefore, as well as Christianity, leads to ascetic practices. Monasteries are institutions of Buddhism no less than of Catholic Christianity.”
- Gnosticism: under INCARNATION, **The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary**: “A name indicating the assumption of superior capacity for knowledge (GR. Gnosis, “knowledge). Gnosticism in its diverse forms received its impulse, and in the main its guidance, from PAGAN PHILOSOPHY. In different ways it denied the humanity of [Messiah], even to the extent of denying the reality of His human body.”

The Scriptural/Hebraic way of thinking teaches that physical pleasure is not the highest good or goal in the life of the Believer, BUT one should receive it in an attitude of thankfulness and gratefulness to Yahweh for His provision. We are to be careful not to let our possessions possess us nor are we to abuse them. They can become idols if they come between Yahweh and us. But the Scriptural solution is NOT asceticism and denial of all pleasures, but rather we are to dedicate all these to Yahweh and become good stewards over what He has blessed us with in this world.

The Scriptures are very “worldly” oriented. Man is given a charge to establish civilization not escaping it. All things upon the earth come from Yahweh’s hands (**Yeshayahu 44:24**). We are accountable to our Creator for all He gives us to enjoy. We are to take the material world He created and set it apart for His use by using it to fulfill the mitzvot. Even our Rebbe Yahshua enjoyed the pleasures of Yahweh’s creation. He never called his talmidim to escape this world (**Yochanan 17:15-19**) but rather to be wise and faithful stewards who were accountable to Yahweh for their service to Him IN the world. Yahshua Himself was accused of being a drunkard and winebibber.

Also, our Rebbe’s teachings and parables are full of the rich images of weddings, Feasts, farming, celebration, nature, family, and eating and drinking. These are all things that occupied the everyday life of the Yisraelite and common ideas that they could relate to rather than otherworldly teachings and concepts.

Today’s Believers have become too focused on singing, teaching, and waiting for the land of heaven and the pleasures of the *olam haba* instead of focusing upon the importance of setting apart THIS world and their opportunity to bring esteem to Yahweh right now (**1 Cor.6: 20**). In this world we serve Yahweh with our whole being, even the body (**Romans chapter 6**). We are to offer it up daily as an offering, as a priest before Yahweh (**Romans 12:1-2**). Whatever we do IN this world we are to bring esteem to Yahweh (**1 Cor.10: 31**).

Since the body and soul were at enmity to one another according to Greek thought, then marriage and family were also viewed in a negative light. Marriage became an inferior way of live, thus ignoring Yahweh’s FIRST command to multiply and replenish the earth (**Gen. 1:28; 2:18**). The Scriptures clearly teach that marriage is set-apart, honorable, and undefiled (**1 Tim.4: 3-4; Ivrim-Heb. 13:4**). The book *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs) is perhaps the most sensual book of the Scriptures celebrating the sexuality and human relationship of marriage as a type of Yahweh and his relationship with Yisrael. To the Hebrew mind celibacy was a form of paganism practiced by the *goyim*.

We can see then how the ‘church fathers’ views of marriage (Jerome, Augustine, Luther, and Thomas Aquinas) perverted the Scriptures to show marriage and family relations in a bad light. They established a priesthood that practiced celibacy. This also resulted in the Catholic doctrine concerning the Immaculate Conception, perpetual virginity of Miriam, and her bodily assumption into heaven. The Gnostics called marriage, “a foul and polluted way of life”

- “He who loves his own wife too ardently is an adulterer” **JEROME (5th Century)**

Does this sound like Hebraic Torah thinking? How can the SEED of Avraham fill the earth if we all practiced celibacy and did not marry? How can Yahweh bring about all the prophecies concerning ALL Yisrael if they do not fill the earth with SEED? Why does the *TaNak* always speak of children as a blessing from Yahweh (**Tehillim 127:3; 128:3**)?

- **THE SCRIPTURES : 1 Timothy 4:1-3:** “ But the Spirit distinctly says that IN THE LATTER TIMES some shall FALL AWAY from the belief, paying attention to MISLEADING spirits, and teachings of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having been branded on their own conscience, FORBIDDING TO MARRY..”

Notice how the “church fathers” ascetic Greek doctrines of marriage and family are in complete opposition to the Torah and its teachings!

- **Christianity Through the Ages by Earle Cairns page 112:**” ORIGEN lived a simple ASCETIC life that included sleeping on bare boards.”
- **Christianity Through the Ages by Earle Cairns page 151:** “Several influences contributed to the rise of monasticism within the ancient church. The DUALISTIC view of flesh and spirit, with its tendency to consider flesh evil and spirit good-so characteristic of the Orient-influenced Christianity through the Gnostic and Neoplatonic movements. Retirement from the world, it was thought, help the individual crucify the flesh and to develop the spiritual life by meditation and ASCETIC ACTS...The early Church Fathers such as ORIGEN, Cyprian, Tertullian, and Jerome urged CELIBACY as the correct interpretation of such Scriptures...”

From page 155-“Too often monasticism merely pandered the spiritual pride as monks become proud of their ASCETIC acts performed to benefit their souls.”

- **The Jewish Encyclopedia Vol.3 pages 636-637:** In post-Biblical literature Jewish opinion stands out clear and simple: marriage is a duty, and celibacy is a sin.Gen.1: 28 is taken as a command.

Hebraic thought must hold everything in a dynamic UNITY not dualistic thought. Because of the influence of the Greek Plato and other philosophers, our minds became entrenched in the twisted Greek dualistic doctrines. This ALL came about because of the “church” severing itself from the Olive Tree of Yisrael and Hebraic thought.

The “I’ll Fly Away” Mentality

[NOTE: This section is not a meant as a refutation or put down of those who believe in the spirit going to heaven after death nor an affirmation of the soul sleep doctrine. There are good people on both sides of this non-salvation issue. This section is calling Messianic Yisrael back to a proper Hebraic/Scriptural balanced view of living a life focused here upon this earth, and serving Yahweh with all one’s heart, mind, and strength instead of gazing into the heavens Acts 1:10-11.]

We must correct the mistake of focusing upon other-worldliness and staring into the heavens. This is the false doctrine of otherworldly spirituality. Today’s “spiritual person” is pictured as always looking into the heavens and praying. They are so spiritual that they do not have time for “worldly pleasures” and relationships in the world. To be super spiritual in Western thought means to be life denying. They try to detach themselves from this world and transcend into a higher existence. They become totally consumed with “soul winning” and “ministry”, so their loved-ones can “go to heaven”. It is almost as if they are fire-insurance salesmen. Rather than really caring about people and their needs they look for another notch to put on their “gospel gun”. Any activity that seeks to take care of the concerns of this world-the physical, material needs of other people is looked upon as non-spiritual and inferior to the spiritual work of the “ministry”. They are also under the false Greek doctrine that “heaven” is to be their eternal home.

Yet our Rebbe Yahshua HaMoshiach spent most of His time with people IN THE WORLD. Their needs moved Him with compassion to act on their behalf to ease their pain and suffering while pointing them to the Torah and the Father. He ministered to the sinners so much so the religious and pious said; and when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and the sinners, they said to His taught ones, “Why does He eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” **Mark 2:16.**

This false assumption of being spiritual comes from the Greek concept and view of the psyche –*psuche* or “soul” and “spirit” or the dividing of the triunity of man. The Greeks viewed the soul as an immaterial, non-physical, immortal part of the person. They taught that the soul (not the spirit) was the immortal part of man. They always divided the person into spirit, soul, and body and did not view man as a whole BEING or unity. They taught at death the SOUL would leave the body and go to heaven. The *Brit Chadasha* never views salvation and full redemption apart from the bodily resurrection (**Rom.8: 21-23**). It speaks of the person as a whole UNIT that needs to be made whole again by having a bodily resurrection with the “spark of life” or *ruach* coming back into the body to quicken it (**Yochanan 6:40; Rev.20: 5-6**) thereby receiving salvation/healing/redemption for the whole body and soul. Scripturally man is viewed as a total *ECHAD* unity or a whole person with the spirit, soul, AND body as one “package”.

- **The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary page 1213** SOUL: The Heb.term (*nephesh*) may indicate not only the entire inner nature of man, but also his entire personality, i.e., all that pertains to the person of the man; in a sense of person; somebody, everybody (**Deut.26: 16;cf.Josh.11: 11,14**)...but man is *nephesh* “ as a self-living nature by the power of the spirit that proceeds from [Yah], and is in the form of [Yah], and is therefore personal, the operation of which spirit is his endowment with soul.” (**Delitzsch, Bib.Psych, pp.181-182**)... Another meaning of *psuche* is the soul as an essence that differs from the body and it is not dissolved by death (**Matt.10: 28**); the soul freed from the body, a disembodied soul (**Acts 2:27; Rev.20: 4**).
- **The Jewish Encyclopedia Vol.11, pp.472-476:** “ Only through the contact of the Jews with Persian and GREEK thought did the idea of a disembodied soul, having its own individuality, take root in Judaism and find its expression in later Biblical books, as for instance, in the following passages: **Prov.22: 27;Job 32:8; Eccl. 12:7**)...there are no direct references in the Bible to the origin of the soul, its nature, and its relation to the body; but these questions afforded material for the speculations of the ALEXANDRIAN JEWISH SCHOOL, especially Philo Judaeus,who sought the allegorical interpretation of biblical texts the confirmation of his psychological

system. In the three terms “ruach”, “nefesh”, and “neshamah” Philo sees the corroboration of the PLATONIC view that the human soul is tripartite having one part rational, a second more spiritual, and a third the seat of desire...the Rabbis hold that the body is NOT the prison of the soul, but, on the contrary, its medium of development and improvement...Nor do they hold the Platonic view regarding the pre-existence of the soul.”

- **The Jewish Encyclopedia Vol.6 page 340:** “The book [The Wisdom of Solomon] follows the PLATONIC PHYSIOLOGY, according to which the soul has an independent existence, living only for a time in a body that crumbles again into dust. The author probably is an Alexandrian Hellenist who took up the thought that was subsequently further developed by Philo.”

Hebraic thought has the understanding that the “soul” is the BEING or person. People are viewed as a UNITY, a single UNIT- a whole person.

- “And may the Elohim of peace Himself set you completely apart, and your ENTIRE spirit, being, and body-be preserved blameless AT THE COMING OF OUR MASTER YAHSHUA MESSIAH.” **The Scriptures from South Africa ISR 1 Thess.5:23**
- “Be preserved sound and complete [and found] blameless...” **The Amplified Bible**
- WHOLE or ENTIRE: #3648 *holokleros* meaning, “Complete in every part, perfectly sound, -entire, whole.”
- PRESERVED: #5083 *tereo* meaning, “To guard, keep, watch over, and hold fast, to keep from loss or injury by keeping an eye upon.”

Yahweh’s plan is to have the WHOLE person as ONE UNITY preserved until Yahshua returns. In the resurrection we will be made WHOLE with complete redemption or salvation for the entire man. Only after the *ruach* comes back into a man is the soul and the body are “quickened or made alive again” (**Romans 8:11**). Then and only then do we experience true complete salvation or deliverance. The body MUST be included in the redemptive process in order for man to be a WHOLE UNIT in the plan of Yahweh.

Our Rebbe Yahshua always spoke of healing of the body as making a person WHOLE (**Matt.9: 21-22; 14:36; 15:28, 31**). This word is *SOZO* or various forms of the word meaning, “To save, deliver, make whole, preserve”. Divine healing is a “flash forward” to experience a small foretaste of the resurrection. The damaged part is made “whole” or “saved” from sickness or disease in this world! The SOUL or BEING also needs “saved” by belief (**Ivrim-Hebrews 10:39**). A part of the soul (*nephesh*) and the body die and “sleep” until the *ruach* makes it alive again in the total redemption of the person (**Yechezqel 18:4**). The whole soul (all 5 parts) and body does not possess immortality until the resurrection (**1 Timothy 6:16; 1 Corinthians 15:53-54; 1 Timothy 1:17**) as the *ruach* reenters the BODY AND SOUL.

A person is NOT a soul that inhabits a body. The soul or “being” stands for the person himself. The Torah teaches that man is an animated body rather than an incarnated soul. This is why I like the translation of *The Scriptures by the ISR* from South Africa.

It uses the word BEING instead of “soul”. In Hebrew a “living being” is *nephesh chayyah*. Man’s soul is the vitality of his life-never a separate part of a man. The Hebrew word *ruach* means wind or breath (air in motion). It is Yahweh’s power that created and keeps all things (**Yeshayahu 31:3; 40:7; Tehillim-Ps.33: 6; 104:29-30**). *Nephesh* and *Ruach* carry the idea of ANIMATION and LIFE. The function of breath or wind is to bring alive or energize a whole person, his body, and soul (**Acts 2:2**). We can know understand why the Torah is “spiritual” as Rav Shaul taught (**Romans 7: 12, 14**). It can quicken or make alive (Tehillim **–Psalm 119:25, 40,107,154,156,159; Romans 8:11**) because it breathed on by the *Ruach HaKodesh* (**2 Tim.3: 16**) and it is actually alive!

It was the *Ruach* blowing upon the bones of all Yisrael that began the process of bringing them together on Shavuot 33 CE. It is a partial fulfillment of Ezek.37.Yahweh’s *Ruach* is the “life-giving force” that quickens or revives His people Yisrael.

Knowing Yahweh

Also, it is interesting to note that the Hebrew idiom “to know (*YADAH*) Yahweh” is NOT about having an intellectual knowledge of Him. Rather it means to experience in THIS LIFE UPON THE EARTH the real POWER and presence of Yahweh through His acts of compassion, love, and *chesed*. It is a knowing by experience, just as a husband and wife know each other by intimate contact with one another and becoming ONE. It is a revelation of Yahweh as Mosheh experienced in **Shemot (Exodus) 34:1-7**.

So, to the Hebrew mind true spirituality was not to turn INWARD, but it meant to be fully human, fully alive, and empowered by Yahweh's Ruach to serve Him and our neighbor through the Torah and the *mitzvot* by LOVING YAHWEH AND OUR NEIGHBOR AS OURSELVES. The Hebrews KNEW and experienced the reality of Yahweh IN their everyday experiences and by walking in obedience to His Torah. They affirmed creation by bringing and finding a sense of set-apartness in the here and now or what we call the material world. There was no separation of the set-apart and the "secular" areas of life. There was no DUALISM of worlds.

Every aspect of life was to be set-apart to Yahweh. Work AND worship were both an expression of our life before Yahweh. We are to live in this world and yet use all of the creation in the instructive manner in which Yahweh has given us in His Torah (**Col.3: 23; Titus 1:15**). We can look to the heavens and yet keep both feet on the ground!

This TRUTH is reflected in the Scriptural manner of Hebraic blessing found in the *Siddur* (Prayer Book). We do not "bless things", as is the "Christian" practice. Things do not need to be blessed, as they were all created good. We as Messianic Yisrael BLESS YAHWEH THE KING OF THE UNIVERSE WHO HAS CREATED ALL THINGS! This is the pattern of our Rebbe Yahshua and the Torah (**.26: 26; Luke 24:30; Deut.8: 10**). Yahweh alone is worthy of blessing and praising for the good gifts that He gives us as Yisrael. The ancient Hebrews NEVER would have thought to bless the food and wine they ate and drank. It was a completely foreign (pagan) concept to them. Why would one imply the creation was bad or unholy when Yahweh declared it was good (**Gen.1: 31**). That is an insult to Him. To bless the gift rather than the GIVER of the gift is strange Hebraic theology. It suggests what Yahweh has declared clean is profane and must be blessed by a "magic" prayer that makes it set-apart. No, the Torah has already set it apart by declaring it clean and good. If the Torah sets it apart then we bless Yahweh Who gave us the food (**1 Tim.4: 4-5**).

The practice of saying "grace" before a meal is a Greek dualistic thought that is saying that material things must be made "holy" by a special prayer. Thus, we have the Roman consecration of the Eucharist by the "priest" and the false doctrine of transubstantiation. We are told in the Torah to thank Yahweh AFTER we have eaten and are satisfied (**Deut.8: 10**). The Torah tells us to bless Yahweh for the good land which He has given Yisrael and its bounty He has provided by His *chesed*.

NOTE: The first thing Yahweh set-apart in the Torah IS NOT A MATERIAL OBJECT, BUT IT WAS SPACE IN TIME-the Shabbat or 7th day (**Gen.2: 3**). Scriptural history is NOT about how Yisrael celebrated space, but the revelation of how they learned to set-apart TIME and events.

In this WE AS YISRAEL CAN LEARN THE VERY PRESENCE OF YAHWEH IN OUR LIVES AND HIS QUICKENING POWER OF THE RUACH HAKODESH RIGHT HERE ON EARTH IN OUR DAILY ACTIVITIES AS WE LIVE OUT HIS TORAH THROUGH THE MITZVOT!

True Deliverance (Salvation)

During the time of the Middle Ages, the doctrine of salvation became centered on escape from this world. One was not truly "saved" until they left this world. The "good life" was looked upon one that one longed for escape from this mortal life and this world's problems and pressures. If we look around today we can see this in the "church". Everything focuses on "the sweet by and by" and the joy that awaits them in "heaven". Unfortunately, their whole salvation experience is focused on some future life in the heavenly realms where they will be freed from this "sinful world". The word salvation was redefined in Greek terms to fit the dualistic system of thought within the "new religion of Christianity."

- "Because firstly indeed, that THEY (the Yehudim) were entrusted with the Words of Elohim" **Romans 3:2** If they were entrusted with the Words of Yahweh, WHY do we turn to the Greeks for their interpretation and meaning?
- **Christianity Through the Ages by Earle Cairns page 98-101**: Gnosticism: " Salvation, which was only for the soul or spiritual part of man, might begin with faith, but the special gnosis, which [Messiah] imparted to the elite, would be far more beneficial, according to the Gnostic, in the process of the salvation of the soul. Since the body was material and was destined to be cast off, it might be kept under strict ascetic practices or given over to libertinism...It had no place for the human body in the future life. In this respect it resembled the thinking of GREEK mythology and philosophy that it had no future for the human body beyond this life. Its asceticism was a contributing factor to the medieval ascetic movement that we know as monasticism."

In contrast to this Greek dualistic thought, the Hebraic mind viewed salvation as experiencing Yahweh's power and presence IN THIS WORLD. They would know Yahweh, and this salvation would change their lives and society. It was practical application of the Torah and its principles in this world that would transform society. There was a link between "redemption" as an individual and the community as a WHOLE UNIT.

To the Hebrew mind, one was to affirm His presence in EVERY experience of life, and trust in His *chesed* and grace to deliver them IN it. Their identity was found in COMMUNITY, not in isolation from others. The earth was to be their home and was given to man forever. Their lives were to bring esteem to Yahweh through their worship and work IN this world.

Once again we MUST return to the *TaNak* and the Hebrew original to obtain our word definitions. The Torah and NOT the *Brit Chadasha* is our word dictionary to find our word meanings. *YASHA*, the Hebrew verb “to save or to deliver”, is NEVER used in the *TaNak* in the sense of escaping to heaven. It means to liberate, to deliver from evil, to have victory, to be free from oppression, and welfare in THIS WORLD! Yahweh SAVES (*YAHSHUA*) or SALVATION is seen as saving His people Yisrael from evil (**Deut.20: 4**), even by human agency if necessary (**1 Sam.11: 9**).

This concept of salvation is also found in the *Brit Chadasha*. The prophecy over the Moshiach Yahshua by Zechariyah in **Luke 1:71-74** includes the concept of a NATIONAL deliverance of Yisrael from their enemies. The Exodus itself teaches us that salvation involves concern for a physical well being in THIS world as well as the spiritual well being of the nation. **Tehillim (Psalm) 72** is speaking of David *Melek Yisrael*, but it is also speaking of the Moshiach. The Moshiach is to be BOTH Savior and King.

We can see, therefore, that the ministry of our Rebbe Yahshua HaMoshiach was a picture of this Hebrew verb – *YASHA*. He healed the sick, set free the oppressed, and saved them from their Torah breaking (sin) IN ORDER TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE MESSIANIC AGE TO COME (*olam haba*) **Luke 4:16-21**. Our Rebbe taught us as His *talmidim* to be involved in the lives of people in order to set them free and to bring WHOLENESS to them in this world. He is YAHWEH’S SALVATION HERE UPON THE EARTH!

Belief (faith) - An action word

The second concept that needs correction is a Scriptural view of belief or what is commonly called “faith”. To the average Believer “faith” is a mental activity that involves intellectual assent to the truth found in the Scriptures. It remains in the realm of the mind with no action attached to it. We say a prayer and you are “saved” by faith. This is NOT the Hebraic or Scriptural concept of belief. (**Ya’akov-James 1:19-25; 2:12-26**). We have allowed the Greeks to redefine our Scriptural words to fit their philosophy. Let us return to the Hebrew once again to obtain our word definitions and meanings to the Hebrew mind-set.

The Hebrew verb- *AMAN* means “faith, trust, believe, support, nourish, make firm or lasting”. Notice it is a VERB. It is interesting that the Hebrew words-*OMENET* (nurse) and *OMENOT* (pillars) come from this root. The Hebrew word –*EMUNAH* means “faithfulness, trust, firmness, stability, support, to be reliable”. It is first used in Shemot (Exodus) 17:12 concerning Mosheh hands being *EMUNAH* or steady or firm so the battle could be won over the Almalikites. This required an action on the part of Mosheh for deliverance to come to Yisrael.

We can see by the law of first usage it refers to being steady, firm, reliable, or faithfulness. **Habakkuk 2:4** states that, “the righteous one lives by his steadfastness.” This is quoted by Rav Shaul in **Romans 1:17** and **Galatians 3:11**. IN THIS CONTEXT THEN WE CAN SEE THAT THE SITUATION THE YISRAELITES FOUND THEMSELVES IN WOULD REQUIRE THEM TO HAVE A DEEPLY ROOTED DEPENDENCE UPON YAHWEH AND HIS WISDOM. THEY WOULD NEED “FAITH” TO STAY STEADY, FAITHFUL, TO OUTLAST THE IMPENDING DAY THAT WAS COMING. Our Rebbe Yahshua repeated this same concept in **Mattithyahu 24:13**, “But he who shall have ENDURED to the end SHALL BE SAVED” also see **Matt.10: 22**.

Another word derived from the root *AMAN* is *EMET* or truth. It means steady, firm, sureness. Yahweh is abounding in *AHAVAH* and *EMET* (**Ex.34: 6; Num.14: 18**). His Word is truth. The Torah is steadfast or reliable (**Yochanan 17:17**). Therefore Scriptural belief MUST be based upon the TRUTH of the Torah (**Romans 10:8-21**) and its steadfastness.

We can now understand that to the Hebrew mind FAITH meant confidence or trust in Yahweh and His Word. It required one to step out into LIFE to act on that trust or belief that he had in Yahweh and the Word he received from Him by prophecy, dream, *malakim*, or the *TaNak* (**Ivrim-Heb.11**). What he had in his heart was translated and affirmed by his actions IN LIFE. It was not playing mental gymnastics or theory. It was a sure reality IN LIFE.

A person who had belief was committed to Yahweh, and could venture into the unknown in full assurance and expectation that Yahweh would be there. It required ACTION! We can step into tomorrow knowing that Yahweh will be waiting for us there. A person without belief in Yahweh will cling to the past in fear, thinking Yahweh will not be there in the future. This is what happened to our forefathers in the wilderness journey of 40 years. They kept looking back to *Mitzrayim* (Egypt) and were fearful of what tomorrow would bring.

In contrast to the Yisraelites unbelief, every one of our Elders in **Ivrim/Hebrews 11** ACTED because they had belief. The Word tells they obtained witness by their belief. Fear (which is the opposite of belief) will paralyze you into non-action and passivity.

Our Rebbe taught us NOT to be fearful of what tomorrow will bring, and that Yahweh would provide for us if we seek His kingship and righteousness (**Matt.6: 24-34**). In fact, He says we are men of little or small belief if we worry and fret about these material things and His provision for the future.

- “But without belief it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohim HAS to believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them who earnestly seek Him.” **Ivrim 11:6**

True belief is a leap of action rather than a leap of thought. Therefore Scriptural belief or faith MUST operate in the realm of TODAY and this world. Faith will confront the wrongs in this world and transform lives NOW to prepare us for the age to come.

A Sense of Community

The final concept that the “church” has twisted in its thinking is the individual verses the community. Dualism fosters the idea of seclusion and withdrawal from society as a whole. It becomes self-oriented and seeks its own welfare rather than the good of the community.

The Hebrew word –*ADAM* can mean a man as an individual or mankind as a whole UNIT. The Torah was given to each Yisraelite as an individual but yet to ALL Yisrael as a community. We are *MISHPACHAH* or family. A family includes not only the immediate family but also the NATION AS A WHOLE COLLECTIVE UNIT. How can we tell that we are part of the Elohim family? Let us turn to the words of our Rebbe Yahshua HaMoshiach.

- “And He [Yahshua] answered them, saying, “Who is My mother, or My BROTHERS?” And looking around on those sitting round Him, He said, ‘See My mother and My BROTHERS! For Whoever DOES the desire of Elohim is My brother and My sister and mother.” **Mark 3:33-34**. Here we find that the true brothers and sisters of Yahshua our Master are DOING the Torah, which is the will of the Father in Heaven.
- “Because through Him [Moshiach Yahshua] we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the set-apart ones, AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF ELOHIM.” If we are IN Messiah Yahshua then we are part of Elohim’s HOUSEHOLD or family.
- “Therefore, “Come out of from among them and be separate, says Yahweh, and do not touch what is unclean, and I shall receive you. And I shall be a FATHER to you, and you shall be SONS and DAUGHTERS to Me, says Yahweh Almighty.” **2 Cor.6: 17-18**. Separated ourselves from the unclean and darkness will also qualify us as part of the family of Yahweh.
- NOTE: The Hebrew word-*b’nai* is children. Its root is *banah*–“to build”. It has the very same root (*banah*) as *beit* or HOUSE. *BEIT* CAN ALSO MEAN TO HAVE CHILDREN OR TO BUILD A FAMILY! If we are part of the household of Elohim then we are also His children. His true Dwelling Place cannot be separate from His true children!

The Hebrew words-*AM* (people) –*CHAVURAH* (community) - and *KEHILLAH* (assembly or congregation) emphasize accountability and togetherness as a community of Believers. We are our brothers keeper (**Gen.4: 9**). As Messianic Yisrael we need to take responsibilities such as *tzedakah* (charity or alms), abstaining from *lashon ha-ra* (gossip), *hevra kadisha* (burial of the dead), visiting the home-bound and sick -*bikor holim*, kindness to animals, and Zionism or support of the Nation of Israel. In the *Brit Chadasha* the book of Ya’akov (James) covers all the community aspects for the Believer in HaMoshiach Yahshua our Rebbe. It is the most “Hebrew” book in the *Brit Chadasha* (Renewed Covenant) as it stresses life and behavior within the community of Believers. Ya’akov gets down to the practicality of our walk (*halakah*) in Yahshua and the inter-personal relationships within the Messianic Community. His book is a commentary on the teachings or Torah of his half-brother Yahshua HaMoshiach found in the Sermon on the Mount in **Mattithyahu 5-7**. Ya’akov’s teaching show that belief is expressed within the community by action and not just words. Belief and works are not conflicting values as commonly misunderstood but complimentary. It is a faith that works within this world by observance of the Torah mitzvot in the Messianic Community that is an expression of our truly believing in Moshiach. He is our example to follow (**I Yochanan 1:6**). His love is expressed through us to our neighbor as He lives IN us and THROUGH us as Yisrael.

- “For as the BODY without the ruach (spirit) is dead, so also the belief is dead without the works.” **Ya’akov 2:26**
- “My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in DEED and in TRUTH.” **I Yochanan 3:18**

Messianic Yisrael is the BODY of Moshiach and each individual is a member of that Body. We are the SEED (family) of our Father Avraham. We are all ECHAD or ONE corporate personality (**Yochanan 17: 18-26; 1 Cor.12: 13; Rom.4: 11, 16; Gal.3: 26-29**). The group identity becomes our own, yet we are individuals. We seek out each other’s best interests considering others better than ourselves (**Philippians 2**). We are to be a community of living, loving, learning, worshipping, praying, assembling (Ivrim-Hebrews 10:25), and study. Yisrael will only be as strong as the sum of the individual members of the BODY. When one is suffering, we all are suffering (**1Cor.12: 26; Gal.6: 1-6**). True spirituality is oriented towards the community. When we sever our ties with Hebraic thinking and focus on “our salvation” we become selfish and self-centered and fail to be community focused.

This great Restoration of ALL Yisrael through Moshiach Yahshua is a NATIONAL RESTORATION that will come through individuals laboring IN COMMUNITY to bring about the return of the “Lost Sheep of the House of Yisrael”.

Conclusion

If we carefully study this “Beginners Torah Lesson”, we will understand that it is imperative that Messianic Yisrael returns to the Hebraic mind-set and forsake the Greek Platonic dualism of the “church”. It has resulted only in misapplication and misinterpretation of the Word of Yahweh (2 **Kepha –Peter 3:15-18**). It is ONLY by the renewing of the mind to Torah based thinking that we can return to Yahweh and His Torah (**Romans 12:1-2**). Greek Philosophical thought was the vehicle that heresies entered the Body of Moshiach and only scripturally renewed minds would help us to return to the Torah and Yahweh. Let us as Yisrael not continue in the lies and mistakes of our fathers (**Yirmeyahu 16:19**).

May Yahweh bless your understanding of this teaching.
Rabbi Edward Levi Nydle B’nai Avraham, Ottumwa, Iowa

“O Yahweh, why do You make us stray from Your ways, and harden our heart from Your fear? Turn back, for the sake of Your servants, the TRIBES of Your inheritance.” **Yeshayahu 63:17**

“Do not be conformed to this world-this age, fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs. But be transformed (changed) by the (entire) renewal of your mind-by its new ideals and its new attitude-so that you may prove (for yourselves) what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of [Elohim], even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect (in His sight for you). **Romans 12:2 Amplified Bible**