

## **A Perfect Example That the Law (Torah) Abides with Grace**

If you've read any of my blog posts you know that I get tired of the whole "we're under grace" explanation from people when it comes to license to sin and be disobedient. I know that there are some who will never agree that the Law (Torah) is still valid and that some aspects of it still need to be followed. There will always be some out there who will continue to sin, claiming that ALL of the Torah was nailed to the cross and that Grace totally replaces it. There will also always be people who think that the earth is flat and there will always be those who believe that the Earth is billions of years old and we're the product of macro-evolution. There are some who are unwilling to look at scripture in its correct light because they are comfortable in their bias. I mean, sure, it is much easier to believe that Grace replaced Torah because it relieves people of accountability. I do believe in Grace, but I also believe that it is coupled with Torah and obedience of both. Yes, you have to obey grace. I like to stand on the words of Yeshua, who said:

*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Matthew 5:18*

As far as I can tell, this is the same heaven and earth that have always existed, therefore Torah is still valid and has not "passed away." If I've missed that even in the history books, please let me know, okay? Since they haven't and they are still around, and sin still abounds, it appears that Torah is valid. Yes, Yeshua did fulfill part of the Torah. It is because of Him that we no longer are slaves to sin and we no longer need to sacrifice. The provision for sacrifice and forgiveness have been attained through Yeshua, but things like the Ten Commandments are still valid, aren't they? I sometimes wonder if they are, judging the way that the Christian Church is doing things these days. It is interesting to watch the Church condemn the world for lying, adultery, fornication, idol worship and other such things while these same things are rampant within the Church at large. Again, if you've read my posts, you know that one of the strangest claims made by the "the Torah is replace by Grace" camp is that, okay, the Law is no longer in effect, but you had better tithe every week or God will put a curse on you, you finances and every aspect of your life. The Law is dead, oh, except for that one. This same "church" condemns Messianic believers who want to keep Kosher, celebrate the Sabbath (Shabbat) on Friday night and Saturday, and keep the Feasts of Israel; while at the same time celebrating pagan Eshtar (Easter) by holding Easter Egg hunts on the Church grounds; and erecting Christmas Trees (clearly pagan in origin) on the same "altar" which they call people down to accept Yeshua as Lord and Savior.

As Messianic believers, we tend to celebrate the “Resurrection,” at or around the celebration of Passover. Take Passover (the Time around the crucifixion) and add three days and bam, you have Resurrection Day. As Messianic believers, we ponder the birth of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, and we do so around the time of the Fall Feasts, when his birth really occurred. If you have questions, do an internet search about how the Feasts of Israel correspond as a foreshadow of Yeshua’s first coming and a prophecy of His Second Coming, it is fantastic. And finally, we really (my family anyway) really don’t prefer to be called Messianic believers, seeing all of the strangeness that comes with some who go by that moniker. We’re simply Torah Observant Followers of Yeshua.

So, getting back to this Law vs Grace argument that so many seem to have with each other. Christians are funny; you ask them four questions and you’ll get eight arguments. Nobody knows how to have civil conversations anymore. It seems that currently, if you don’t believe what the other person is saying, you’re a heretic and you’re not saved. Personally, I don’t want to wear those moccasins. That is condemnation, and it is exactly what Yeshua told us not to do when we judge. We’re to judge with correct judgment; to judge by discrimination. Oh no, he said discrimination. It’s really not a bad word, although it’s meaning has been changed over the years to mean one thing, racist. When someone correctly discriminates, they discern using the senses and/or they judge by seeing if something is what it claims to be. If your neighbor tells you to go out into his or her backyard to pick some peaches, but you find that there is an apple tree because the tree bears apples, you have discerned that your neighbor either doesn’t know the difference between peaches and apples, or they are just plain crazy. The Church is very quick to judge on things that are not really important and they’re afraid to judge on the things that really matter. For instance, Joel Olsteen says that he prefers not to teach about sin and hell because it offends people. But wait, Yeshua talked about sin and hell more than any other subject in the Gospels. However, the “faith movement” that teachers like Olsteen belong to say that you can name and claim anything that you want, that you should expect it and that when (or if) your prayers are answered then you are blessed. He teaches that people should be happy and full of joy because this life is so wonderful and that if have enough faith, you will not have any misery in your life. That’s a big difference from Yeshua, who said that we will always have the poor with us, that people will hate us for our testimony for Him and that we should look forward to the life to come because this world has nothing lasting to offer us. Hmmm, I choose to believe Yeshua, not Olsteen.

Well, getting back to the Torah vs. Faith debate. Really, there is no debate. If there is no law, then we fail to know what we need Grace for, right? The Torah shows us what is offensive

to Yahweh; Grace shows us how, through Yeshua, we can overcome our flesh and its sinful tendencies through Faith that Yahweh will work all things out for His Purpose. So I mentioned that I've been looking for a way to explain Torah vs. Grace in a simplistic way. I've asked Yahweh to show me how this can be done. Little did I know that Yahweh would cause the City of Springfield, Oregon to give me the answer. This answer showed me that there had to be Torah for there to be Grace, and that in fact, the only way that there could be Grace is if it was built on the foundation of Torah, or the Law. In the same way that the Cross had to have a firm foundation in order to hold Yeshua upright, Grace has to have a foundation in order to hold Grace upright. Many people say that a good definition of Grace is, "God Did It," and that is so true. Yahweh had to show us what he gives us Grace over. For instance, if you walk into a field and pick an apple from a tree, you're just picking an apple from a tree, right? However, if Yahweh found that offensive, he would put a sign on the property that trespassing was not allowed and that picking apples off of any tree on that land was unlawful.

Using the illustration above, let's look at what happened in the Garden of Eden. Chava and Adam were told not to eat of the Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil. That was a Law that Yahweh laid down for them to obey. Eve was beguiled by the Nachash and Adam followed suit. Later, Yahweh was looking for them so that they could walk together in the Garden and called out to them. When they were discovered, they were afraid and knew that they were naked. Well, how did they know that they were naked? They knew that they now had the knowledge of good vs. evil and they knew that by breaking Yahweh's command, they had done evil. Their innocence had died and they now possessed a sin nature. There was cause and effect, and their failure to obey Yahweh led all of their descendants down the trail of separation from Elohim. Later, a system of atoning sacrifices was instituted to cover the sin, but although it was covered, it was not removed. It was sort of like the farmer who was working out in his field on Wednesday and didn't have time to take a shower before Wednesday night Bible Study. So, he washed his face, combed his hair and put on different clothes hoping to appear somewhat clean. His dirty body was covered, but the dirt was still there. That is what sacrificing animals did; it provided a covering so that Yahweh could see His People (still dirty) but not see the dirt. Later, he sent us a shower from Heaven, through a perfect sacrifice to remove the dirt that only He could remove. Simple, isn't it? The thing is that a person has to want to be clean (Kosher) and they have to accept the cleansing that Yahweh can only provide. Just think about how clean that farmer feels when he gets home from Bible Study and finally takes that shower. He feels clean, refreshed and renewed, and he knows that he can finally rest.

Okay, so I was long winded for a reason. So, I was driving in Springfield the other day and I see this sign. It is the perfect illustration of Law and Grace working together. Let me present the picture and then explain.



The Cross, based on Law with the provision of Grace

First of all, I became interested in the word for the street, Kruse Way. Knowing that words like this, that begin with the letter “K” are many times of German origin I did a word translation and found that the German word for Crucifix is *Kruzifix*, and the German word for Cross is *Kreuz*. In Spanish the word for Cross is *Cruzar*. Do you see where I’m going here. The street is named Cross Way, if translated from German into English. The fact that the name in English is spelled Kruse could possibly have been a misspelling that happened at Ellis Island or another place of entry into the United States. Many surnames are misspelled, which causes nightmares when doing genealogical searches. The word Kruse spelled with a “s” does not

translate from German into English, this is what made me come to the conclusion about a misspelling upon arrival here in the states.

Notice that the Law sign (the stop sign) appears to be the foundation that the cross is placed in. Also notice that there is a provision that allows the law to be skirted, but only in one direction. The sign that allows a person to blow through the sign, making a right turn without stopping. This is great; however, a prudent driver will always look to the left anyway, just to make sure that the way is clear. To me, this application is shown when, say, I want to participate in something with a worldly person. A good example would be going to a place that serves alcohol in order to celebrate a graduation. There are many places that serve food with alcohol thrown in as an added feature. So, I go to the place and order food, then I remember how much I used to enjoy drinking a beer when I was a young man. I consider having a beer, however I remember what it used to do to me, and I also remember that I am a witness for Yeshua, a light shining in the darkness and we are told not to put a bushel over the light. Drinking the beer might ruin my witness for Yeshua, or it could cause me to stumble and do something stupid, again ruining my witness for Yeshua. So, although I am able to participate, just like the sign gave license to turn without stopping, I still look and check to see if what I am about to do could cause me or someone else danger. I have the grace to turn right without looking, but I just want to avoid an accident and look anyway.

Although I have permission to turn right without looking, I am not allowed to turn left without stopping first. There are reasons why I cannot turn left without stopping. First, the law tells me to stop and I have to obey the law. Second, a car that is coming from the left side, although they have to stop too, can go if he or she arrives at her stop sign before I arrive at mine. If we both obey the law, we both avoid making a mistake, we both avoid an accident and we both can proceed without damage to our cars or our persons. Looking at the traffic laws as a whole, all people have to stop at all stop signs all of the time; that is the law. However, special provision is given at our stop sign on “Cross” Way because Cross Way is special and unique. The City of Springfield has granted grace to those turning right, and it guarantees that anyone turning right is in the right and is not offending the Law.

This picture is fantastic, I think, because it shows the importance of realizing that Torah (Law) and Grace exist together. Without Torah, it would not be possible to know what a person is receiving grace for. Without Grace, the Torah is impossible to follow and thus it becomes a burden. This sign proves that, although Grace is available, it is conditional to the situation at hand. Torah says that getting tattoos and piercings are offensive to Yahweh because Torah (Law)

breakers and pagans do such things. Grace exists when the Ruach Ha Kodesh finally gets through the thick skin of the believer and the believer realizes that they have grieved Yahweh. At that time, repentance occurs, the believer becomes ashamed that they have offended Yahweh and ask for forgiveness whereupon grace is granted. Torah says that not honoring your parents carries a penalty, possibly an early death. The Ruach Ha Kodesh uses the Torah to convict the offender, who if he or she is sensitive to the Ruach, will then mourn that they have offended Yahweh's command, whereupon they will repent and ask for forgiveness.

Grace is shown through the ministry of Yeshua. Two of the main things that Yeshua said were, "your sins are forgiven," and "go and sin no more." Torah shows us that we offend Yahweh, we seek forgiveness and then we repent (turn around) and sin no more. How can someone know that they are sinning if they don't know that they are offending Yahweh? That is why we have Torah and that is why it is important to read Torah, Nevi'im and Ketuvim. Yahweh has given us a "complete" manual and we need to read the entire manual to know how things work and how things are put together. Grace is shown all over the Tanakh. Torah showed us what not to do. The Ketuvim (writings) showed us what happens when the Torah is offended, and the Nevi'im (Prophets) pointed forward to a time when forgiveness, grace and salvation would come. Grace came through the person of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, the same with salvation and forgiveness. We no longer need to atone for sin. Someday soon, Yeshua will return to complete His mission of Grace by bringing spiritual and physical salvation to all of us Jews. Grace is Mashiach coming back after more than two millennia of stubbornness, sin and rejection, and still for offering forgiveness and redemption. On that day, there will be a national repentance in Israel and Jewish people all around the world and on that day, Grace will be seen like it has not been seen since the last time Yeshua walked the Hills of Yisrael.

So, let's not use grace as a license to sin. Let's not proclaim that the Torah is dead, or that the Old Testament is of no value. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Tanakh is available for us to know what Yahweh requires, what grieves Him and that we cannot come to Him without Grace. The Brit Hadasha shows us Grace, and yes, Yeshua fulfilled all of the laws of atonement, but let's not throw out the baby with the bath water, okay?