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Grafted In Fellowship

NOTE: The following are the general notes used for the teaching. They were primarily meant for reminders of the topic I wanted to cover, and do not include all that was said during the teaching.

## The study time began with a reciting of the Shema. Deut 6:4-9

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Shema is translated as “hear,” hence why our translation reads, “Hear, O Israel...”

However, there is more to the word “shema” than “hear.” It actually means to “hear and obey!” How do we obey? We “do” what we are told to do—the rest of the Shema tells us what we are to do!

Yeshua’s brother, Jacob (we call him James), is stressing this point about the Shema! Read James 1:22-25

But be **doers of the word, and not hearers only**, deceiving yourselves. [Who is deceived? Those who only hear the word!] <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and **not a doer**, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. <sup>25</sup> But he who looks into the **perfect law of liberty** [That’s right! God’s Torah, what we call “law”, is perfect and gives us liberty!] and continues *in it*, and is **not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed** in what he does.

# Why We Believe What We Believe

## Foundational Statement

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Do you believe this?

## Second Foundational Statement

The Bible does not contradict itself. This statement follows that God's Word is inerrant...there are no mistakes by God.

If we come across scripture verses that have been interpreted as God has done away with His commands, we can no longer say we believe the two foundational statements above.

But step back for a second and actually think through what is being said by this interpretation: God did away with His commands. If God has done away with them, does this mean that He knew they couldn't be followed? Would God really do this? Does this match up with what scripture tells us?

- God tells us His commands are not too hard (Deuteronomy 30:11-14)
- Yeshua tells us His "yoke" (Torah) is easy, the burden light (Mt 11:30)

Remember Moses told God, when God was going to destroy the children of Israel, that if He did kill them that would mean He could not deliver the children. Isn't this what we are saying when we say He has done away with His commands?

So what do we do with the scriptures that have been interpreted as God has done away with His commands? Obviously, they have been misinterpreted!

Who does everyone turn to in order to prove that God has done away with His commands? Rabbi Shaul! Does he actually say this? Or have we misinterpreted his writings? Even Peter stated that Rabbi Shaul was hard to understand—and Peter was Jewish! And yet, here we are 2000 years later thinking we can better interpret/understand what Shaul was talking about than Peter!

But again, let's step back and think about what we have been told: If we believe that God is the same, AND we also believe that the Bible does not contradict itself, THEN we say that Paul has said the Torah has been done away with...who are we placing our trust in? MAN, ie Paul! Who is the Boss? Paul or God? Yet we say that all scripture is inspired by the Spirit. Would the Spirit contradict Himself? We just got through saying He wouldn't!

The problem is, the people who started this misinterpretation, starting even in Shaul's day, were people who wanted to do away with the "Jewish" aspects of "Christianity"!

I say "Jewish" only because the Bible never actually calls them "Jewish" practices. Let's look:  
Lev 23:1-2, God says to follow "His Feasts"  
Throughout the Tanakh, God says to follow "His commands"

Do you see anything that calls them “Jewish”, “Hebrew”, or “Israel” feasts of commands? NO!

If you do things the way God says to do them, no matter who does them, they will look the same. As it turns out, it was the children of Israel who said, “I do!” to God, accepting His commands and way of life. Therefore, by default, we call them “Jewish”.

Throughout the Bible, God uses terminology about marriage. He is coming for His bride. The Torah is seen as a ketubah—a marriage covenant. So again, step back and think about this analogy. Prior to getting married, we date our future spouses. During this time, we court each other, we talk about our likes and dislikes—we are “teaching” each other about ourselves. When we do get married, do we stop trying to please our spouses (all jokes aside about being married)? If I buy my wife flowers because she loves flowers, am I now being “legalistic” just because we are now married? What is the difference then with our relationship with God? When we accept Him as Lord and Savior of our lives, does this mean that we can now stop trying to please Him? We no longer have to obey His Torah? And if we do follow His Torah, then we are being legalistic? NO! Of course, there are those who do try to obtain salvation, and even maintain salvation, by keeping God’s commandments. That is not the purpose! It was never the purpose!

In fact, look at the sequence of events in the giving of His commandments—the Exodus from Egypt. When were the commandments given? In the desert at Mt. Sinai! Were the

commandments given while they were still in Egypt? NO! They were freed from slavery, they were taken out of bondage, then they were taken out of Egypt BEFORE the commandments were given! This is the same with us today! We are set free from our sins, we are taken out of bondage, we are taken out of “Egypt”, so now that we are free, how are we supposed to live? God gave us His “instructions” for us to follow—not for salvation, but in order to live a life pleasing to Him!

Torah does not mean “law”! It actually means, teaching or instruction. The problem is with the word “law”. The confusion started when the Tanakh was translated into Greek—the Septuagint. The Greek had no concept for Torah. There is no word for Torah. The sages decided on the Greek word “nomos” – law. Our problem is our perception of law. We tend to think of law as something that is to be followed as long as we are being watched, but when we can get away with it, we don’t follow the law. (Speed limit example). However, God’s commandments are not this way! His commandments are to be followed, because if we don’t, we will be broken! (Low clearance example). Is the “low clearance” “law” a bad law? No! It is warning us that if we proceed, we will be in major trouble! This is the same with God’s instructions...if we continue disobeying His instruction – His Torah – we will be in major trouble!

Final thought: If we say that we believe the foundational statements above (God is same, Word no contradiction), and then say, “Ya, BUT...”, we have just negated the foundational statements!