

The Book Of James (Part 15) – A Hearer, A Doer & The Mirror

May 2, 2026

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://cornerfringe.com/media/qdfktd5/part-15>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

The Perfect Law of Liberty: A Doer of the Work

This transcript of a sermon delivered by **Pastor Daniel Joseph** of **Corner Fringe Ministries** examines the biblical book of James by highlighting the fundamental **theological unity between the teachings of James and the Apostle Paul**. Daniel argues that both figures viewed the **Law and the Prophets as the essential authority** for understanding salvation, provided they are interpreted through faith in Jesus. Central to this discussion is the concept of being **"doers of the word" rather than just "hearers,"** a principle that **transforms the law** from a source of **condemnation** into a **"perfect law of liberty."** By using a mirror analogy, Daniel illustrates how scripture reveals a person's true spiritual state and **demand active obedience**. Ultimately, he contends that the **Old Testament remains vital for modern believers** because it provides the **divine instruction** necessary to navigate the path toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

Well, Shabbat Shalom. We are pushing into week 15 here of this Epistle of James, and last week we were hovering over verses 21 and 22. We are not done, so we're going to begin right there, going back to verse 21. This is what James says: James 1:21—**Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness, with humility, the implanted word,** and this is the most critical point, **which is able to save your souls** (emphasis added).

Again, to stress the point, receiving the implanted word is the difference between whether you will live or die. It's the difference of whether you're going to see the Kingdom of God or you're going to see the wrath of God in the lake of fire. And that's not hyperbole, that is not an exaggeration, that is not getting emotional; that is a biblical fact. And you want to let the moment sink in.

Everything you need to get to the Kingdom of Heaven is right in this book; it is right in His Word. All the wisdom of God, the understanding of God, the knowledge of God, the truth of God, the power of God, and all the instructions: This is a blueprint, this is a guide, and this is a map of how you get to the Kingdom of Heaven. And I'm going to tell you right now: you will not survive. You will not make it without this. You won't make it without the Word of God.

In fact, this is the point Moses hit home with Israel when he told them in Deuteronomy 8:3. He said, **"... man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the**

LORD." Moses was telling them, "The only way you survive, the only way you make it, is on the Word of the LORD."

And so, with that, I want to open up today by taking you to Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy. And we're going to see, yet once again, and I'm going to continue to point this out as we go through this series, the unity between the Apostle Paul and that of James. That they're on the same team, they're going in the exact same direction, and they're preaching the same exact message. And unfortunately, certain men in history have attempted to convince believers otherwise that James stands in opposition to Paul and that they bear a different gospel. No such thing is true. And you'll see this throughout this series. You're going to see this more and more and get a really good taste today.

With that, I want to take you to 2 Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 15, a passage we're all well acquainted with. Paul says to Timothy, **and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures**, in Greek, '*hiera grammata*' (ἱερὰ γράμματα). (Emphasis added).

It's important, before we go any further, to understand the historical context in which this statement was made. In other words, what does Paul mean when he says "*hiera grammata*"? What does he mean by the Holy Scriptures? Well, I can tell you this without reservation; he is referring to what we typically call the Law and the Prophets, what Christians call the Old Testament, what scholars call the Hebrew Bible, and what the Jews call the Tanakh. This is radically significant.

The day Paul made this statement, the New Testament didn't exist. And this is a point that we've made already thus far, and I'm going to bring it back to the table. The New Testament did not exist when Paul was writing this epistle. There is only one thing on his mind, one well that he drew from that was authoritative: one. And that is what we call the Old Testament, the Law and the Prophets.

Now, certainly the New Testament would develop, but I mean, even if you take the first epistle that was written all the way to the end of the Book of Revelation, you're talking about over a 50-year span before all these letters begin to circulate. You're talking over 50 years. And it's not until even the fourth century that we see this crystallization of what we would call today the New Testament canon of 27 books, where we lock them in and say, "These are divinely inspired; this is authoritative."

The first guy to come on the scene was Athanasius in 367, and that erupted. After that happened, council after council, you had the Council of Rome, 382. You had the Council of Carthage, 393. Then you have the Council of Hippo, Augustine presiding over 397. And in every one of these things, they were locking it down. So, as you get to the fourth century, we have this corpus of 27 books that we identify as the New Testament. And so, it would be formed, and it doesn't mean that these letters weren't being distributed before then. And it doesn't mean that they weren't considered authoritative.

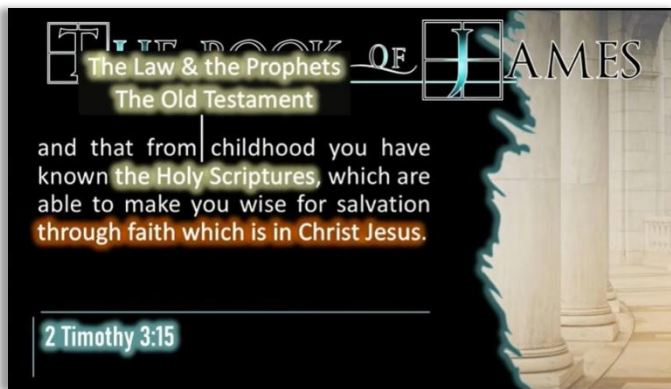
But listen to what I'm about to tell you and don't ever forget it. The New Testament, as we have it today, presupposes the validity and the authority of the Old Testament. Do you know what that means? What that means is it's totally codependent upon the authority of the Law and the Prophets. Every time it says "Scripture has said" or "it is written" or "you've heard it said," when you see those statements, where are they coming from? It's coming from the only well the Apostle Paul drew from in the first century.

In fact, Paul himself says that when he preached the gospel of Jesus, when he went out preaching, he literally said (Acts 26:22), "I said **no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come.**" No other things than that which the Law and the Prophets... How did they prove that Yeshua

was the Messiah? It was the Law and the Prophets. Okay? Now, this doesn't mean that the New Testament isn't divinely inspired. It is divinely inspired. It is this divine exegesis on the Torah and the prophets. It's not an independent work. It is not a separate work. It is 100% codependent upon the Law and the Prophets.

With that said, it is imperative that we understand what is going to follow now. Having the historical context, understanding that the only thing in view here is the Law and the Prophets. You see why this is important. Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:15, **“and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation...”** (Emphasis added). Literally, the exact same thing James just brought to the table. Receive the implanted word; he's talking about the law, which is able to save your souls. It's interesting. Both Paul and James are saying the same thing. They're going in the same direction. They have the same doctrine. And the way they look at the Torah, the way they look at the Law and the Prophets, is with the highest regard, so much so that they're saying that from them we derive instruction for salvation.

And so, you look at this, and you think about where we're at today with the Christian Church and much of Christendom unhitching from the law. Looking at the Old Testament as antiquated, outdated, and not relevant for the Christian believer today, this idea is completely contrary to the New Testament itself. The New Testament contradicts this. Paul contradicts that mindset. But can you appreciate why the devil would want you to unhitch and would want you to reject the Torah and the prophets as being, you know what? That's done. We don't need that anymore. Well, just look at this. That's what's able to make you wise for salvation. We're talking about salvation. And anytime we talk about something that's salvific to your faith, nothing else matters; that's your focus. Amen?



But as we continue, and this is going to be important, the Apostle Paul adds a clarifier to this verse in 2 Timothy 3:15, and it's appropriate—**... through faith which is in Christ Jesus** (emphasis added). Oh, don't you love that? What he's telling you is you're not going to draw the saving grace, the reality of salvation, from the Torah and the prophets if you attempt to go any other way than through the door of Yeshua. You cannot read the Law and the Prophets without looking through the lens of Yeshua.

Do you understand that all the mysteries of God are locked? Do you understand that the riches that are embedded within cannot be acquired any other way except through Yeshua Himself?

It's interesting, in 2 Corinthians 3:14, what does Paul say? He says of his own Jewish brethren, they're studying the Old Testament. **But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.** It's literally what the text says. They have a veil over their eyes, and the only way the veil is removed in reading the Law and the Prophets is through faith in Christ. That's the only way. And so, I love this clarifier.

But then he's going to go on and say this in 2 Timothy 3:16: *Pasa graphē* (πᾶσα γραφή)—**All Scripture** (emphasis added); we're talking about the Law and the Prophets in their totality. The Torah, the Nevi'im, and the Ketuvim: the law, the prophets, and the writings. All Scripture **is given by inspiration of God...** In

Greek, this inspiration of God is *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος). What it literally means is God-breathed. It's God's word. This is not a work of man whatsoever.

And I think of Peter in 2 Peter 1:20-21. Peter says, “No prophecy of Scripture,” whether we're talking about the law or the prophets, “is of any private interpretation,²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” It's all a work. You can go to the Old Testament, you can go to the New Testament, and what you realize is the construction of the Law and the Prophets; it's not man's. The law was not Moshe. The law was *theopneustos*; it was God-breathed. That puts it in a completely different category, correct? The way we look at it.

Of course, your agnostics and your atheists would try to compel you and convince you, “Oh, no, no, no, the work of the Bible is a work of man.” Men who are flawed, men who have many, many erroneous thoughts. That's what it is. No, it's not. The work of the Law and the Prophets is exclusively *theopneustos*. It's God-breathed.

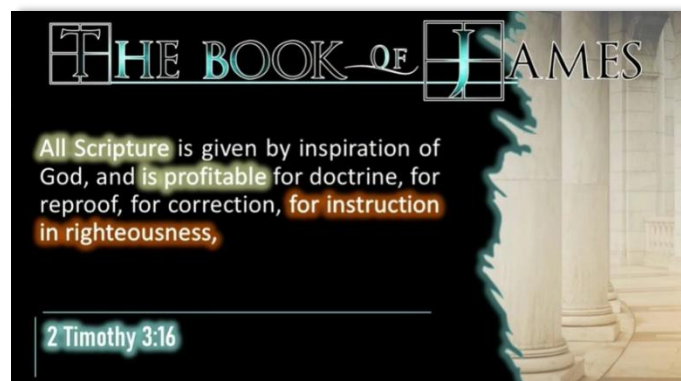
There's a reason Paul says to the Romans that the law is spiritual. You can't say that because man in his flesh and of his own opinion is nothing spiritual; it's flesh. But the law is spiritual. And this is where we really begin to unpack why this is so important in regard to understanding what the Law and the Prophets are, the salvation that is affixed to the Law and the Prophets.

Paul goes on and says in 2 Timothy 3:16, “and is profitable for doctrine...” In other words, developing my theology, what I am to believe is developed from the Law and the Prophets. And it's not just for doctrine; it's “for reproof” (emphasis added), *elegmon* (ἐλεγμών) in the Greek, which literally means “conviction.” And this is important, so you understand the process. Before you ever repent, something has to happen. It's *elegmon*; it's conviction.

The Apostle Paul tells the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 7:10, “For godly sorrow, conviction, produces repentance leading to salvation...” All you need to do is interrupt this process. If you never get conviction and a holy fear of God, you will never repent. Oh, and the devil knows this. Again, no mystery of why the devil wants to remove the Law and the Prophets from the Christian church today—no mystery.

And then he says something in conjunction with conviction; he says, “for correction...” Again, the Law and the Prophets show us what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong. And the idea is that we want to come in line with God's heart, with God's wisdom, with God's mind, and “for instruction in righteousness.” (Emphasis added).

That instruction in righteousness—I want you to remember what we're told of Yeshua. It's found in Hebrews 1:9 and Psalm 45:7. We're told He “loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.” Now this is our Lord and Savior. He loves righteousness and hates lawlessness. And we're told what righteousness is: all His commandments are righteousness.



You know, it's an interesting thought in bringing this all together that there's this idea, and I've talked to Christian pastors; I've talked to professors. There is this idea that, "Hey Daniel, if we don't see something in the New Testament, we as Christians don't have to do it." Well, that would really put the Christian church into a predicament for the first couple of hundred years. Let me tell you.

The problem with that ideology is that what you're saying is that the New Testament is a replacement for the Old Testament. No New Testament author ever came out of the gate and said, "What I'm writing to you replaces the Old Testament." You know what they did? They actually stood on the authority of the Law and the Prophets. That's what gave them the validity.

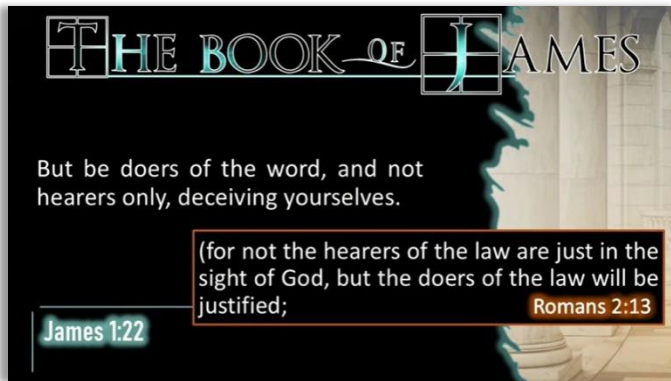
So, in other words, I don't care if you don't see it in the New Testament. There are many commandments ... there's no prohibition against bestiality in the New Testament. Does that mean you can go out and start marrying goats? God help us. You want to talk about insanity. There's no prohibition against incest, but that's abominable to God. Well, how do I know? Well, from the law. There's no prohibition against knowing your wife during a time of her impurity. Is that now sanctified? I mean, we can go down the line. The New Testament is not a replacement. It's a divine exegesis that is totally codependent upon the authority and validity of the law. I hope you're tracking with me.

2 Timothy 3:17—**that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.** Armed to the teeth for every good work and able to be a witness for the Holy Name of Yeshua. That's the beauty of submitting and drawing from the wisdom and the understanding, not of man, not of Moses, but of God. *Theopneustos*. It's God-breathed.

And to show you why Paul is going through this discourse, look at what he goes on to say in 2 Timothy 4:3, **"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..."** (Emphasis added). Do you remember what he just said? He just said in 2 Timothy 3:16, **"All scripture, *Pasa graphē*, ... is profitable for doctrine."** The Law and the Prophets, the only things he's referring to, are profitable doctrine. And now we're told the time is coming when they're not going to endure the Law and the Prophets. We're living in this in the words of this prophecy because now preachers are coming out and saying, "You know, Christians don't need the law. Unhitch from that." So, Paul is warning that the time is coming.

2 Timothy 4:3-4—**... but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth,** and all Your law is truth, Psalm 119:142, **and be turned aside to fables** (emphasis added). Do you understand why it is so important that we have the historical context so that we actually appreciate what Paul is referring to? And here's what's fascinating. Many Christian scholars acknowledge that the only thing that Paul has in view here is the Law and the Prophets. That's the irony—amazing.

James 1:21—**Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls** (emphasis added). So, as we look at James' words here, where he talks about receiving the implanted word, which is able to save your souls, there is much to appreciate. There's much to understand.



Now jumping to James 1:22, James says, **"But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."** In the interest of the spirit of unity, yet once again, I want to show you how aligned the Apostles Paul and James are and how it's not an exaggeration. They're literally preaching the exact same message.

Look at what Paul says to the Romans in Romans 2:13; he says this: **"(for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of**

God, but the doers of the law will be justified." Identical statements. They're preaching the same message, and it's interesting; they're concerned about the deception that comes with man lying to himself, thinking he can be a hearer, but it's not a big deal if he's not a doer. That would be an abuse of grace, which is happening.

Breaking new ground today, James 1:23—**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.** Now this is profound because James brings an analogy to the table to bring us deeper into the realm of understanding of what he's brought forward. And he says it's like anyone who hears the word but is not a doer; he's observing his face in a mirror. What James is doing is he's taking the mirror and saying the mirror is that of the law.

And think about this: what do you do with the mirror? Well, I think most of you, at least for a second or two before you leave the house, will jump in front of a mirror. What are you looking for? You want to make sure you're put together, and there's not stuff, you know, lipstick going up your cheek and your hair going 12 different ways. You just want to make sure you look presentable. It's the mirror that shows you who you are. It reveals whether you're presentable or not. That's the work of the law. When you look into the law, it is greatly revealing.

And so, James goes on and says in James 1:24, **"For he observes himself, goes away from the mirror, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was."** He forgets what he looked like. What did you see? Well, that's what it's like when you go to the law and you receive it, but you're hearing only, and you don't go do it. The exact same thing.

James 1:25—**But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it—listen to this—and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does** (emphasis added). There is so much here; we won't get through it all. There's a lot here to appreciate; there's a lot to unpack.

To get started, though, I want to highlight this. Look at this language. James grabs this idea, calling it the perfect law. I'm going to tell you that this is not unique to James in the sense that this is James' opinion and he's formulating this verbiage. This is something he is borrowing from Scripture, more specifically from a Psalm of David. And I want to take you there to really appreciate when he talks about the perfect law; we need to appreciate what he's drawing from.



תורת יהוה תמימה משיבת נפש
עדות יהוה נאמנה מחכימת פתי
The law of the LORD is perfect,

And so, going to Psalm 19:7, and this is the Hebrew. *Torat Yahweh temimah meshivat nafesh edut Yahweh ne'emanah machkimat peti* (תורת יהוה תמימה משיבת נפש עדות יהוה נאמנה מחכימת פתי). I want to go through this line by line with you. We'll do it in English, but there are going to be moments when we'll benefit from having the Hebrew with us.

Looking at the first line, "*Torat Yahweh temimah*." Here, David is coming on the scene, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and says, "**The law is perfect.**" It's exactly what James is drawing from. This is his understanding: the law is perfect.

Now this is interesting because when you get into the Hebrew for "perfect," it's "*temimah*." "*Temimah*" means "without blemish." It has no blemish. By definition, one of the words you could use is "it is perfect." It is without corruption; it is flawless. And listen to me, that means it has no errors. It's perfect. The reason it's important to identify this is the reason the Holy Spirit spoke this through David, pointing back to the Torah and revealing that the Torah is blemishless; it's perfect. It has no errors. You can bet your life on it. It has no errors. You can bet your life on what it says. That matters.

תורת יהוה תמימה משיבת נפש
עדות יהוה נאמנה מחכימת פתי
The law of the LORD is perfect, con-
verting the soul;

Now, he goes on and says this: "*meshivat nafesh*," converting the soul. Converting is "*meshivat*." The root is "*shuv*" (שוב). It means "to turn." It has the power; the law has the power to turn you back away from following the voice of a stranger to following the voice of the shepherd. To

turn you from death and destruction to the saving grace and the blessing of the Lord Yeshua. This is the power of the law. It instills the fear of God. Proverbs 16:6... **And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.**

תורת יהוה תמימה משיבת נפש
עדות יהוה נאמנה מחכימת פתי
The law of the LORD is perfect, con-
verting the soul; the testimony of the
LORD is sure,

Then it goes on and says this: "*edut Yahweh ne'emanah*." "*Edut*," this word for testimony, is explicit to the heart of Torah, to what you would call the foundation of Torah, the Decalogue, the *Aseret Hadevarim* (עשרת הדברִים), the Ten Commandments. It's absolutely incredible. And it's not a coincidence that when the

young rich man comes to Yeshua and asks (Matthew 19:16), "**...what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?**" Yeshua goes to the *edut*. He goes to the testimony, the words that every man, woman, and child heard with their ears.

And what the Psalmist or Holy Spirit says is that the testimony of Yahweh is "*ne'emanah*"; it is faithful. It is faithful. And that brings you back to Numbers 23:19—... **Has He (God) said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?** All the promises of God are yes. They're yes in the Messiah, Yeshua. Everything He says, when His word says He is coming to destroy the sinners from the earth, His word is faithful. When He says (Matthew 19:17), "**But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments,**" that's faithful. You can bet your life on it, and that's critical.



And then it ends, "*machkimat peti*." This "making wise"—*peti*, the foolish. And actually, "*peti*," if you really want to embrace this term, refers to those who are gullible. And, you know, without getting myself in trouble, there are times that we meet people in this life who would be identified ... maybe you could tell this

person anything, and they'd believe anything. That is *peti*; that's what this means. It means someone who is wallowing in ignorance; they're very gullible. They're wallowing in foolishness.

The power of the law is to take someone who is gullible, who Satan is leveraging for his kingdom, to build the kingdom of darkness and rip them out of there and make them wise. That's what I want because I can tell you that before I was living for Yeshua, I was *machkimat peti*. I was *peti*. I was the foolish one doing foolish things, seeking after things of the world. There's no wisdom in seeking the things of the world. There's nothing; you're a fool being led by the devil. The power of the Word; it comes in and takes you out of that if, in fact, you receive the implanted Word with what? Humility—humbleness.

James 1:25—**But he who looks into the perfect law of 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** (emphasis added). And so, going back to James and looking at this statement, "the perfect law," this is not James going out on his own tangent. He's drawing from Scripture. This is how Scripture actually describes the law. But look at what James does here; this is amazing. He calls it "the perfect law of liberty."

Now I have to tell you, growing up in evangelical Christianity, those two words did not come together in unity. In fact, I would have told you 30 years ago that what you're saying, if you were to just come to me and say, "Oh, the law is the perfect law of liberty," I would say, "That's an oxymoron." Because when you say "law," I think "curse." When you say Torah, I think bondage. This is the response. How in the world can James talk about the law with this clarifier of liberty, "the perfect law of liberty"?

Well, all we need to do here, number one, is analyze exactly what he says here because he answers it in these four lines. He says, "**But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it and is not a forgetful hearer, oh, but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.**" (Emphasis added). Now take this in because this is important at this moment. James is talking about the perfect law of liberty, something that would be very, very foreign to many Christians today. How can he do that? Because he's referencing it specifically in the context of you being a doer, not a hearer. Then you are walking ... the doers of the law; they walk in the law of liberty.

Do you know what's interesting when we read in the Bible about the law in a negative connotation, where it carries those negative terms of a curse or bondage? Do you know what the context of that is? It is the exact opposite of this. It's when we're not doers of the law. We need to connect these dots.

Let me take you to Galatians Chapter 3, and I'll tell you this really quick. If you're ever going to have a conversation with someone who is at least somewhat well-equipped in the Word, and they very much so take the antinomian position, they're taking an anti-law position because of the grace of Jesus. I'm going to tell you right now, ground zero for the discussion is Galatians 3 for them every time. And I say this because you'd better get well acquainted with what Paul says in Galatians 3, and I'm going to take you there.

This is what we read in Galatians 3:10—**For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse...** What does he mean by that? There, you have this negative connotation. We have the works of the law. Okay? "Under the curse." What is the context? He tells you—**for it is written**, by the way, quoting Deuteronomy. He's quoting the law in this. **"Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."** (Emphasis added).

Well, that's interesting. Here we have Paul again in Galatians, and what did James say? James 1:25—**But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it...** (Emphasis added). It's called the perfect law of liberty by someone who's actually doing it, and to those who are not doing it, it's a curse. This is a template that is going to echo through the rest of the series. Connecting these dots up on the front end is going to be very, very helpful.

But to kind of move things along, I'm going to take you back to the Psalms. And I'm going to show you how the Psalms describe this. That's exactly how James has brought it forward. In Psalm 119:44, the psalmist says, **"So shall I keep Your law continually**, Le'olam va'ed (לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד), **forever and ever."** I keep it faithfully. He's declaring, "I keep it faithfully." Now listen to how this is described. Psalm 119:44—**And I will walk at liberty**; I will walk at liberty, **for I seek Your precepts** (emphasis added). To the doers of the law, it makes sense that now you're on the path of freedom. You're in the path of liberty.

To further put this into perspective, I want to take you back to some early Jewish work known as *Pirkei Avot*. It's called the "Sayings of the Fathers." In fact, there have been Jewish commentators saying that the tractate *Pirkei Avot* is so important that Judaism wouldn't exist without it. It's a pretty strong statement. But it reads like a book of wisdom. It reads like Ecclesiastes; it reads like Proverbs, but I want to take you back there, and keep in mind this is in the contemporary realm of the apostles. This is going back to how ancient Judaism viewed certain things.

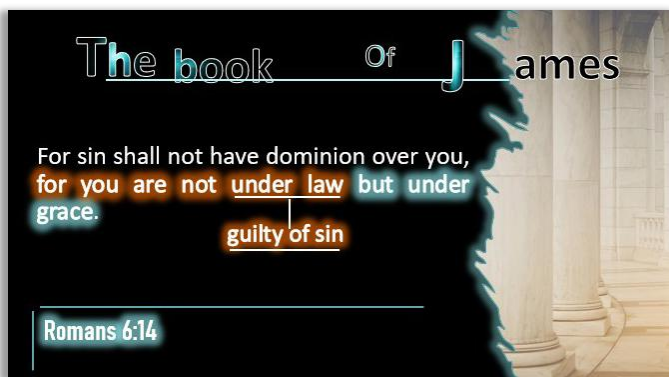
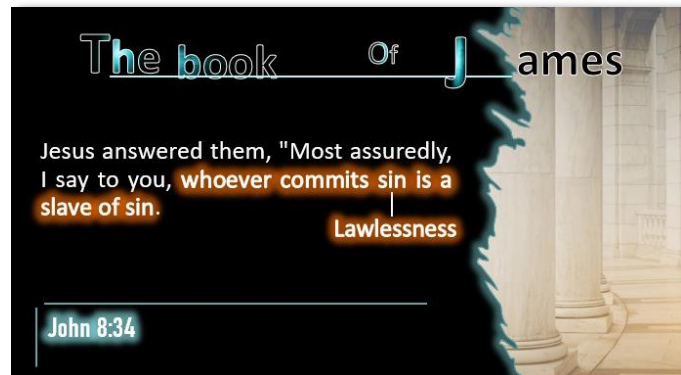
And so, we open up in *Pirkei Avot* 1:15a—**Shammai says**, —there were two primary schools of thought in rabbinic Judaism, the house of Shammai and the house of Hillel, and they didn't agree on a whole lot. Be that as it may, Shammai says, **"Make your learning of Torah a fixed obligation**. Oh, I love this. **"Say little and do much** (emphasis added). That's amazing because that's the exact point James made in James 1:19, has he not? Did he not say, **"Be swift to hear, slow to speak"**? And the next thing that comes out of his mouth is James 1:22, **"But be doers of the word..."** We're tracking here.

He goes on; he says in *Pirkei Avot* 6:2, **R. Joshua b. Levi has said: Every day a Bath-Qol**, which is a voice from heaven, **goes forth from Mount Horeb** or Mount Sinai **and proclaims and says 'Woe to mankind**, now, we're talking about the Gentiles, **because of their insulting of the Torah'; for every one that is not occupied with the Torah is called reprobate; as it is said: 'As a jewel of gold in the snout of a swine, so is**

a fair woman without sense.’ And Scripture says: ‘And the tables, meaning the tablets—it’s talking about the Ten Commandments—were the work of God, and the writing, the writing of God, graven on the tables.’ Or tablets.

And this is where we get to the point. Read not ‘haruth’ (which means graven) but ‘heruth (which means freedom); for none is your freeman, but he who is occupied with the study of Torah. In other words, the rabbis are getting clever here to convey an idea; it’s wordplay. Don’t say that the Lord engraved it on there, but say, “Heruth,” meaning the things that He put on there are going to lead you in the path of life. This is the idea.

And to bring Yeshua into the mix, the ultimate rabbi, the ultimate teacher, what did Yeshua say in regard to this? John 8:34—Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **whoever commits sin is a slave of sin**” (emphasis added). Whoever commits sin is a slave; you are in bondage to sin. Now, this statement was predicated upon the previous statement in John 8:31-32, which we covered last week, where Yeshua says, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” The antithesis to not being a doer of the Word is this in John 8:34: “Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.” That’s total bondage. And what is sin? It’s lawlessness; it’s pure lawlessness. It’s the antithesis.



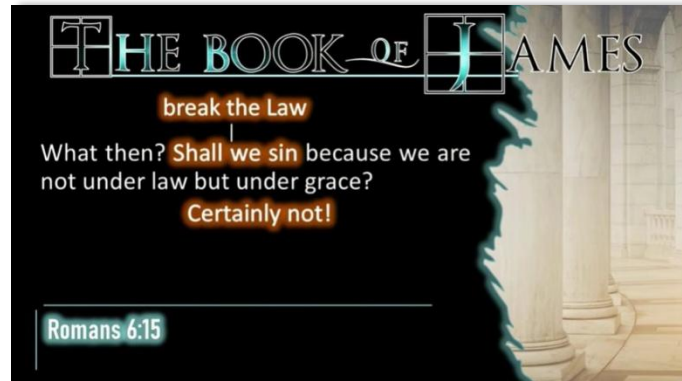
To push this further and bring about an understanding of how all of this looks. I want to take you to Romans 6:14. The Apostle Paul says, “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” (Emphasis added).

And let’s be clear: when we talk about being under law, it’s talking about you being guilty from the law; you’re guilty of sin; you’ve broken the law. Therefore, the power and authority of the law come over you, and

yes, it condemns you; that’s the power of the law. You know, the sting of death is sin, but the strength of sin is the law. There’s no question about this.

And so, we see that if (Romans 3:23) **all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**, the problem is sin. The power of sin is the law. It condemns all humanity. Well, we need a Savior. We need Yeshua. And so, Paul is bringing this all together and saying sin is not to have dominion, which it would be if I were held in contempt. But we’re under grace, the grace of our Lord Yeshua; He sets us free.

And then, as we come into Romans 6:15, **What then? Shall we sin**—shall we continue in lawlessness, breaking the law? **Because we are not under law**. We're not held guilty by the law, **but under grace? Certainly not!** (Emphasis added). This is where the disconnect happens. This is where the tension comes in for a lot of modern-day Christianity in regard to the relationship that a Christian is really supposed to have with the law.



Satan comes in and says there is no relationship to be had. You're supposed to run the other way. In fact, if you try to submit to the law, you're rejecting grace. Paul takes the discussion the exact opposite way. How the enemy gets away with this, I don't know. It's astounding because Paul goes the other way. Shall we sin because we're not under law but under grace? God forbid.

Romans 6:16—**Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death...** Has that changed? Can I ask you, has that changed after the coming of Yeshua? After His coming, can we now continue to walk in sin, and that leads to life? Paul says sin leads to death, **or of obedience leading to righteousness?** (Emphasis added). He's talking about salvation. Obedience to God's commandments, to His Word, and the beauty of His Word lead to salvation. In fact, in Hebrews 5:9, the writer talks about Yeshua becoming **the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him**. John 14:15—**"If you love Me, keep My commandments."** We're getting into that realm again.

Romans 6:18—**And having been set free from sin ...** And can you say three words? "Because of Jesus." Because of Yeshua, there's no other way we are set free. The problem with the world is sin. The answer is Yeshua the Messiah. Ephesians 2:8—**For by grace you have been saved through faith....** He gets all the glory. This is not us establishing our own righteousness. Listen to me; this is us responding to the blessed sacrifice that our Father sent so that we could live. It's a response to the Gospel, and this is what Paul is conveying. —**And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness** (emphasis added). Psalm 119:172—**... For all Your commandments are righteousness.**

And so, Paul says in Romans 3:31, **"Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not!"** God forbid; we do nothing of the kind. **On the contrary, we establish the law.** Paul is literally drawing back from the Torah in Deuteronomy 27. That's the response. We received grace. We know we didn't save ourselves. There's no righteous work we could bring before Yeshua the Messiah and say, "Hey, You need to receive me because look at how good I am." No, it's Luke 18:13, **"... be merciful to me a sinner!"** And now that He's forgiven you, you become a slave of righteousness. It is a response to the gospel.

I want to share an Augustine quote with you. Now it's no secret that Augustine and I don't agree on everything. There are certainly some doctrinal things that we could discuss, but the overarching theme is that Augustine had some profound insight into certain matters, one of which is this matter. And so I want to take you to his work, *"A Treatise on the Spirit and the Letter,"* and listen to this. This is so profound.



Augustine of Hippo, *A Treatise on the Spirit and the Letter*—in Schaff, P. (ed.), Holmes, P. (tran.)—**For that teaching which brings to us the command to live in chastity and righteousness is the letter that killeth...** (Emphasis added). Augustine is borrowing from Paul in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, where Paul comes forward and says in 2 Corinthians 3:6, **“... for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”**

But notice what Augustine recognizes here. The teaching, which brings us “the command to live in chastity and righteousness.” This is what a believer is called to. We are called to observe His holy law. And he says to do this is the letter that killeth, but this gets better: **unless accompanied with “the spirit that giveth life.”** (Emphasis added). In other words, a true Christian should be approaching the law not in the power of their flesh but in the beauty of the Spirit of the Living God.

There's a statement found in Ezekiel 2:1 where the Lord comes to Ezekiel and says, **“Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.”** As the Lord spoke to him, *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος)—it was “God-breathed.” As He spoke to him His word, the text says in Ezekiel 2:2—**Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me...** He was filled with the Spirit of God; that's a showstopper. That's a, “I'm going to stop, and I'm going to meditate on the power of God's Holy Word.” When you receive that, when James talks about receiving the implanted word, Ezekiel did that. As God was speaking to him, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Now that is powerful.

And we have other examples of this happening. Jeremiah says in Jeremiah 15:16, **“Your words were found, and I ate them...”** He had the living truth within him, and he couldn't contain it; it was a fire.

We even have Acts 10, absolutely beautiful. They heard the word of truth, the beautiful gospel of their salvation, Yeshua the Messiah, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

And this Yeshua says in John 6:63, **“The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”** And that everyone who would believe in it would receive that.

And then going back to Paul's words in Romans 7:14, **“For we know that the law, which is the word of God, is spirit; it is spiritual ...”** When you receive those words, you will be filled if you receive them in humility. So awesome.

And so, with that said, we're going to close right here.

[Closing prayer]

Abba Father, we give You praise and glory for Your goodness and faithfulness. The beauty and the power of Your word, which is able to make us wise for salvation. We need this implanted word. And we know we cannot receive this implanted word apart from faith in Your Son. And we're told everyone who calls upon the name of Yeshua will be saved. And Lord Yeshua, may we live lives worthy of Your great sacrifice. May we respond to the gift of salvation and forgiveness and mercy and Your grace with unwavering obedience.

Where we become slaves of righteousness, not slaves of self, slaves of flesh, slaves of disobedience, slaves of rebellion—slaves of the devil. Because we're in these dark days, Lord, I know how badly we need the light. And I pray that our Bibles don't sit there on the shelf collecting dust. But we have an Ezekiel experience that when we open it up and You speak to us, we are filled with the Spirit of God.

And so, Lord, I give You thanks for all the men who served You so faithfully. Men You used to declare Your truth, holy men of God who spoke according to the inspiration of the Spirit. Thank You for preserving Your Word, which are the riches of the kingdom. And so, we pray all this in the mighty name of Yeshua. Amen.

The Mirror of Truth

Hearing vs. Doing the Word

The Nature of the Word



Theopneustos: God-Breathed

All Scripture is divinely inspired and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction.



The Old Testament Foundation

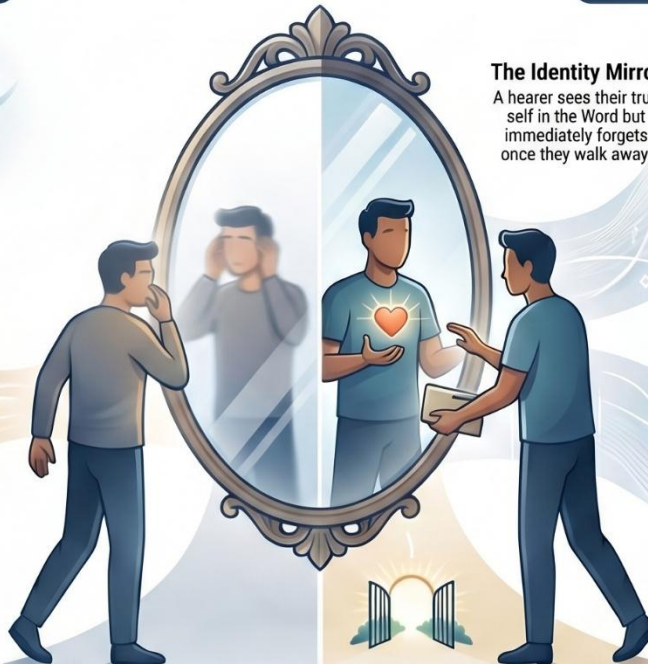
The New Testament is codependent upon the authority and validity of the Law and Prophets.



Meshivat Nafesh: Converting the Soul

The Law has the power to turn a person from death to saving grace.

The Mirror: Hearing vs. Doing



The Identity Mirror

A hearer sees their true self in the Word but immediately forgets once they walk away.



Unity of James and Paul

Both apostles teach that only doers of the law—not just hearers—are justified before God.



The Law of Liberty

Obedience creates a path of freedom, while lawlessness results in being a "slave to sin."

Interaction & Spiritual Outcome

Interaction	Hebrew/Greek Term	Spiritual Outcome
Hearing Only	Peti (Simple/Gullible)	Self-deception and Bondage
Obedient Doing	Heruth (Freedom)	Blessing and Liberty
Divine Inspiration		Thoroughly equipped for good works

