

The Book Of James (Part 23) – Justice & Mercy, Faith & Works

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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/j89hhf4/part-23-justice-mercy-faith-works>

*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 Book of James: Living Faith and Royal Law

This transcript of a sermon delivered by **Pastor Daniel Joseph** of **Corner Fringe Ministries** explores the theological relationship between **faith and works** by examining the second chapter of the **Book of James**. Daniel argues that the **Torah** remains a binding moral standard for believers, emphasizing that **partiality** and a lack of **mercy** are serious transgressions of God's law. He highlights the **sobering warning** that failing in even one point of the law makes a person a transgressor, ultimately revealing our deep need for **Yeshua** as Savior. He challenges contemporary Christian views that suggest the **Ten Commandments** are antiquated, asserting that true, saving faith must be evidenced by **righteous actions**. By synthesizing the teachings of James, Paul, and Yeshua, Daniel presents a **comprehensive view** of the believer's identity as being created specifically for **good works**. Ultimately, he calls for a **sincere commitment** to walking in God's ways, where love and obedience serve as the natural fruit of a transformed heart.

[Daniel Joseph]

Shabbat Shalom, everyone. And just for clarity, we will not be getting to chapter three today [audience laughter]. We will at some point, LORD willing, get there, but for today, as you know, we are right in chapter two. We're more on the front end. Remember, we left off at verse eight.

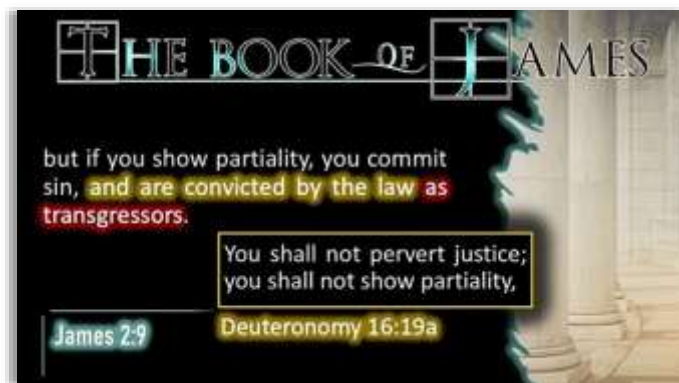
Let me say this before we jump into this: we're going to pick it up right where we left off, of course. But I want to preface today's message with the following: Today, we are going to begin, and my emphasis is on begin. We're going to begin to get into those treacherous waters of controversy. As I mentioned before, historically, all the discussions, the controversy, and the debates that have erupted through the history of Christianity, especially that framework of the Reformation, all come out of the better part of the back half of chapter two, and that's where we're going to be getting into today.

There's no controversy in chapter one, chapter three, chapter four, and chapter five. Certainly, challenging teachings are coming forward, but not controversy as it pertains to theology. We're going to be getting into those waters today. And this is going to get really intense; it's going to get amazing; it's going to be revelatory in nature, and there are things that we're going to peel back that I really haven't even formally done over the years. So, I'm excited about this because what we're getting into will

change your faith. It'll change how you walk out your faith, and I mean that. So, with that said, let's get right to it. We have a lot to cover today.

James 2:8—**If you really fulfill the royal law...** Now, keep in mind James's use of “fulfill”: it's the idea that this is what we're called to do. If we're believers in Yeshua, we are called to fulfill. What? The royal law, the kingly law, not according to James' opinion; James says, **according to the Scripture**. And then he brings the back half of Leviticus 19:18 to the table. That will be important as we get to the end of today's message. James starts here with the back half of this. And what it says is, **"You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"** *kalōs poieite* (καλῶς ποιεῖτε), **you do well**. You do good. You're doing what is right, what is holy. You're actually elevating yourself through the grace of God to the standard. Because love is the standard, period, and if we're not loving, as I mentioned in the last message, there's no way you can keep Torah. You're delusional if you're not operating in love.

But then he goes on and says this: James 2:9—**but if you show partiality, you commit sin...** James circles back; he's coming full circle, actually, regarding what he said in verse one. He brings the issue of partiality to the table. He tells them that if we're in the faith of Yeshua, this is not something we want to



participate in, but now he's letting you know, this is not a moment; hey, this was just a good idea. If you show partiality, you are sinning. And just to be clear, he goes on and says, **and are convicted by the law as transgressors**. (Emphasis added).

Not convicted by his opinion, by what the rabbis think. You're convicted by the Torah, by the Holy Word of God. And what did the law say? This is something we covered.

Deuteronomy 16:19—**"You shall not pervert**

justice; you shall not show partiality..." It's unambiguous. It's embedded within the Torah. Failure to observe this is sin.

Now take this in for a moment because we have a teachable moment right here. When the Epistle of James is written, and we talked about this, you're looking at roughly around 20 years after the resurrection of Yeshua. You're two decades into the Gospel going to the ends of the earth; we are formally in the dispensation of grace. The mercy and grace of Yeshua is being preached, and does James believe that the law is done away with? Does James believe that the law, the Torah, is irrelevant or that it's antiquated? James is portraying it as absolutely, fundamentally binding. It is valid. And I'll tell you, that is a game changer for a good part of Christendom today, who actually believes that, because of the grace of our Lord Yeshua, we can just abandon the law. Listen to these words that he's communicating, because James is saying, "No, no, no. The law is absolutely, fundamentally valid."

And let me say this: when you go to the writer of Hebrews, in Chapter 10, there's a pericope there, beginning at verse 26 and the subsequent verses. And James gets into this, what the scholars would call an *a fortiori*. And what that means is... Okay, so the writer of Hebrews starts and says in Hebrews 10:26—**For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth...** You understand that the writer is saying, "If we willfully break the law after we receive the one who is called 'The Way, The Truth, and The Life.'" After we receive Yeshua, the writer communicates there is no longer an offering for sin. There's no hope. There's no mercy. There's no grace if you rebel against God's law.

Then he goes on: Hebrews 10:28-29—**Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.** ²⁹ **Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?** And this is an *fortiori* moment: it was one thing to sin before the coming of Yeshua. It's a far worse event to do so after the grace of God, after Yeshua gave His own life for us. We should do no such thing. It's actually more incumbent upon Christians today to keep the law than ever in history before Yeshua. It's the exact opposite of what's being peddled.

Now, as we continue, I'm going to tell you, the Epistle of James is so mind-blowing. You come with one verse after another; he's about to take us out at the knees. This verse, for me personally, has challenged me to levels I didn't even know I could be challenged. What is this verse? Look at what he says: James 2:10—**For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.**

God have mercy because I can pat myself on the back, and you know what? I cannot make graven images, and I cannot bow down to them and really feel good about that. That's honoring the LORD. And I cannot take the LORD's name in vain. And I can remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. And I can honor my mother and father. And I can tell you, they would testify to you that I am a son who honors them.

I could not murder. In fact, I could take it a step further and follow the full instructions of Yeshua and say, "You're not even supposed to have hatred in your heart," which is considered a breach of the sixth commandment. And you know what? I cannot lust. I cannot commit adultery and look at another woman with lust. And I could not be a thief. And I cannot bear false witness. I can do all of it and pat myself on the back. But if I covet, it's all for naught. If I break one, I have broken them all. James just took this entire community out at the knees.

This idea that... This is what struck me. I can remember reading this because I was really excited that, "Man, I'm looking at Scripture. I'm looking at the beauty of Torah. I'm looking at the commandments, and I'm going to apply them." The reality is, if I fall at one point, you can do 613, miss one, and you are taken out.

What does this tell you? I'm going to tell you what it tells me. This statement in James 2:10 is so Holy Spirit-inspired it drops me to my knees, begging for mercy. Now, I realize I'm codependent upon Yeshua the Messiah to save me. Because there's not a person here who has not failed in one point of the law. This is the reality that I received from this teaching: I need a savior; I need Yeshua. My own efforts in the Torah, I know, haven't cut it because I failed at one point, and so then I've broken the whole thing. It's the antithesis of being Torah observant.

So, we can pat ourselves on the back for all the things we're doing right, and we love to do that. You know, we become like this religious devil, these Pharisees that come before the Lord and boast of all the things they do. Well, we fast twice a week. I pay tithes of all I possess. And the tax collector is sitting there, can't raise his head, and says, "Be merciful to me as a sinner." That man has clarity. One who thinks he's going to boast before the Lord because he keeps the Shabbat, God have mercy. That is not going to go well for you.

James goes on and says this: James 2:11—**For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of**

the law (emphasis added). James goes right to the 10 commandments. And it's clear he's drawing from the Septuagint tradition—the order of this—we know this. He goes to the words God Himself spoke to Israel. These are known as the *D'varim Ha'Brit* (דְּבָרֵי הַבְּרִית), the words of the Covenant, the *Aseret Ha'Devarim* (עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים), the 10 commandments. This is the heart of Torah. And he warns you, yeah, you can get one right, but if you don't get the other one, it's all for naught. You are a transgressor of Torah.

Let me jump to the other side of the tracks, and this is terrifying because if what James says is true, God help, God have mercy on much of Christendom today. And the reason I'm going to share this with you is that there are thousands of these posts you can go to that have been archived. I want to share an article with you, and it's a platform called "Ask Your Preacher." And it's a platform where you can pose your question. You ask the preacher, and the preacher responds; the pastor responds.

And this particular question. This gentleman, who goes by the pseudonym of Counting To Ten, asked the following. Listen to this: *The Nine Commandments*, Thursday, September 10, 2015—[Were the Ten Commandments only mentioned in the Old Testament? And if so, why do we abide by them today if they were not mentioned or commanded in the New Testament? Sincerely, Counting To Ten.](#)



The response by this preacher: [Dear Counting To Ten— The 'Ten Commandments' were Old Testament laws, and you need to live by nine of them. The New Testament law supersedes the Old Testament one, and the law written on stone tablets \(the Mosaic law, which includes the Ten Commandments {Deu 4:13}\) has passed away \(2 Cor 3:3-11\).](#) The reference there is 2 Corinthians 3:7-11, which I certainly don't want to confuse the writer of the facts here. And I don't have time to do it, but if he continued, Paul himself would literally dismantle the very point he's trying to make.

But moving on—[Having said that, the New Testament reiterates nine out of the ten commands. Christians do obey nine of the 'Ten Commandments' because Christ thought nine of them were worth keeping in the New Testament. This is a preacher. The only one of the 'Ten Commandments' left out is the keeping of the Sabbath \(Ex 20:8\). Christians aren't bound to keep the Sabbath holy; Jews were. You have to keep the other nine though.](#)

Let me tell you, if James 2:10 is true, God have mercy. This is a Holy Spirit-inspired statement. The context of this statement is the Ten Commandments, and if you think it's a coincidence that the enemy who comes to steal, kill, and destroy has come and unburdened the Christian church with the Sabbath, the only commandment that says, "Remember," you got another thing coming. The fact that we could, for one second, think that it's not an issue, it's not that big of a deal, that the Christians would discard one of the commandments in light of this reality—wake up. It matters.

And with all due respect, the enemy does not need to come to your house and convince you to break two, three, four, or five commandments. Go back to the garden, and I ask you: how many

commandments were broken to actually cost Adam and Eve their lives, to separate them from God, and to take them out of the garden? One. One commandment.

James is wielding a double-edged sword. He takes the delusional Torah-observing people out at the knees, and he takes the rebellious Christians out at the knees. That's how we know we're dealing with the Word of God. The Word of God is living and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword.

He moves on, and he says this: James 2:12—**So speak and so do...** (Emphasis added). Now, notice James is building upon what he communicated back in James 1:22, where he said, **But be doers of the word...** He's talking about the commandments, the law. **But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** But pay attention: James doesn't reiterate it exactly; he builds upon it. We're not talking about hearing; we're talking about proclaiming. Proclaim—So speak. What are we proclaiming? The truth of God's Word. The expectation is that we won't shrink back because we're worried about offending someone. We will speak, and we will not be like the hypocrites. We will do it. We will bring credibility to the gospel because we don't follow the hypocrites.

James 2:12—**So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty** (emphasis added). James takes this discussion to another level because now he drops the reality of judgment in front of us. Judgment is coming.

This is what we read in Psalm 96:13—**For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world...** Who are we talking about? The one who is coming, the one who is returning, is Yeshua the Messiah, and He Himself says (John 5:22), **"For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son."** He is the judge of the earth, and Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:10 that we will **all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.** We will all have to answer for what we chose to do in this life. That judgment is coming, and by what standard will Yeshua judge?

Well, look at this; this is a Yeshua moment. —Psalm 96:13—**For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness...** (Emphasis added). And what is righteousness?



—Psalm 119:172— **... For all: All! Not nine, not some, all Your commandments are righteousness** (emphasis added). The standard is His Torah. The standard is the *Aseret Ha'Devarim*, the 10 commandments. That's the standard.

And He goes on in Psalm 96:13— **... And the peoples with His truth** (emphasis added). Well, isn't that interesting? Because we read in Psalm 119:151— **... And all Your commandments are truth** (emphasis added). Not some, all.

So, you can pat yourself on the back, and you say, "Man, I'm doing so much right." You don't need that; that's not what you want to look at. You want to look at where you're failing. Repent, and get your house in order because He's coming; judgment is coming.

James 2:12—**So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty** (emphasis added). James isn't spinning some fairy tale here. This is the warning of all warnings. This is what is always to be before us. Every day we live, we have to think about answering for our decisions. Every day. It will change the rest of your day. In how you respond to people, the things that you say, and the things that you do. It's coming.

Then James expands on this and gives a little insight into the day of judgment. And he says this: James 2:13—**For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment** (emphasis added). This puts things into context when you think about what Yeshua said in Matthew 6:14-15—**For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.** You will never know mercy if you yourself haven't shown mercy.

We read this in Psalm 18:25—**With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful...** What's the inverse of this? With the unmerciful, you will show yourself unmerciful. You'll never see mercy. Yeshua says in Matthew 5:7, **"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."** And He goes on at the end of that sermon (Matthew 7:2), **"For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."** It's going to be measured.

So, think about this, people: as you want to judge, naturally, your flesh is judgmental. Your flesh is wired to be judgmental. To be quick to point out everyone else's flaw while you're walking around with a huge plank in your eye, that comes naturally. And this is why Yeshua says, with all due respect, get in a mirror: you need major surgery. You have a plank in your eye; get that thing out so you can remove the speck from your brother's eye.

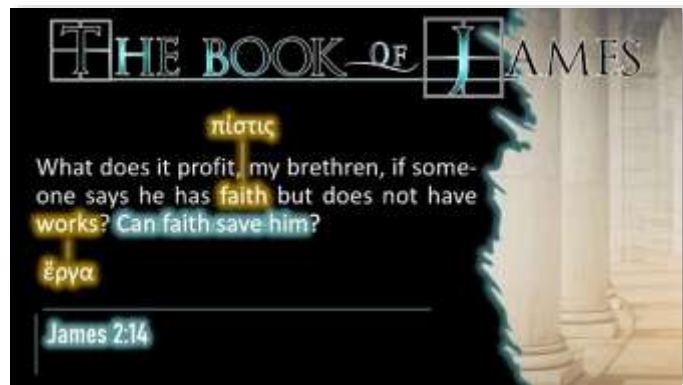
And so, this warning: the habitual behaviors that we see in the church are absolutely an abomination to the LORD. We're missing it; we're missing the concept of what love is. We're missing the beauty of Yeshua and all the mercy He's shown us. We're supposed to be so thankful that that's what we do.

And just to be clear, going back to that statement I made, where James begins by quoting the second half of Leviticus 19:18. This, James 2:13, is the front half. This is the front part of Leviticus 19:18, where we read, **"You shall *Lo tikkom velo tittor et benei ammecha*" (לֹא־תִקֹּם וְלֹא־תִטּוֹר אֶת־בְּנֵי עַמֶּךָ).** **You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people...** The concept of this statement is that you've been wronged. And the idea is, if you've been wronged, you've been sinned against—what's your response? Your response is, I'm going to take vengeance. As he's done to me, I'm going to do it to him. Scripture says, no, you're not supposed to do that. And you're not even supposed to bear a grudge, holding that bitterness in your heart. The only way you can't hold that bitterness in your heart is mercy. Forgiveness. The very thing that Yeshua has shown you.

So, think of this: when someone sins against you, when someone actually wrongs you, and you, from the heart, don't give lip service, the LORD knows. But from the heart, you forgive that person. What an opportunity to show someone else the love that Yeshua has shown you. But the stuff we're talking about—this is real faith. This is what real Christians embrace. This is what real Christians walk out.

You know, I love what Yeshua says multiple times in the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew 9:13, and then again in Matthew 12:7, He says, **"But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice'..."** We're so accustomed to it; we want to do all these things in the name of the LORD, and we feel good. What the LORD is looking for from us is the very thing He's shown us. He's looking for mercy.

Moving to James 2:14—**What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ...** (Emphasis added). Now we need to dig into this a bit. And I want to grab both of these descriptors of what's going on here. Faith, "*pistis*" (πίστις) in Greek, and "*erga*" (ἔργα), which is "works." For you to have any appreciation for the magnitude of what James is conveying here, you have to know what he's talking about. What does he mean regarding "*pistis*," regarding faith? He is talking about someone who has faith that Yeshua is the Son of God. They believe that He rose the third day and that by His stripes they're healed and that in Him is salvation. It is faith in Yeshua, but he is explicit. It's conceptual; it's cognitive only. This is what he's bringing to the table: a cognitive faith, something in the mind and the heart that you sincerely believe. You believe Yeshua is the Messiah.



But then when he says, "*erga*," works, what is he talking about? He is explicitly talking about the works of Torah. Obedience to His commandments—he's talking about the works of love, of kindness, of mercy, all these things. And I can't define love, or mercy, or all this stuff apart from the Torah, because the Torah promotes love. It's a book of love. And so, when we're talking about...we're talking faith in Yeshua, a concept in the mind. But if he does not have *erga*, righteous works, walking out the Torah, James asked the million-dollar question. He asks (James 2:14), **... Can faith save him?** (Emphasis added).

That's a million-dollar question. I've used this phrase before. I want to be clear. When I start talking about a million-dollar question, I'm talking about those questions posed by the apostles that will change your faith. It'll change your theology. That kind of conceptual faith that Yeshua is the Messiah but has no action—can that person be saved?

Listen to what James says. Let's keep in mind we're now getting into the waters of controversy. —James 2:15-16—**If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?** (Emphasis added). When he says that, what does your faith in Yeshua the Messiah profit when you're not helping your brother; you're not loving your neighbor as yourself? Leviticus 19:18: This is not happening. And so, he says this: James 2:17—**Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead** (emphasis added). Conceptual faith that Yeshua is the Christ—if it doesn't have works, it's a lie.

If you want further proof, I want you to know James is not alone; he's taking a page from his master's book. These are the words of Yeshua. So, if you go back to Matthew 25, it begins with the parable of the 10 virgins. And then there's another story told that's built upon the template of that parable. Remember, you had five virgins; they're all virgins, they're 10 virgins, five are wise, and five are foolish. He builds on that by taking you into the judgment. And this is the moment where Yeshua separates the sheep from the goats.

This is important because sheep and goats are both clean animals. And actually, both of those animals were allowed to be offered for the *Pesach* offering. The goat was the one offered on Yom Kippur. And

notice he doesn't say sheep and pigs. This is built upon this understanding of the 10 virgins; they're all wise. So, you have to see how scary this is because we're dealing with the church, and what's interesting is when you go to Ezekiel 34, and actually, somebody just read it in prayer this morning, which is a tidbit of irony. There, the LORD says through the prophet that He will divide sheep from sheep and sheep from goats, and He's talking about His flock. And so, there's so much going on there.

What He says in Matthew 25:33-36—“And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Now, here's the most important part. He tells them why. Why do they get to inherit the kingdom? He says, ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’” We're talking about the example James brings to the table, which is literally built upon Yeshua's words.

But to the goats, we read this: Matthew 25:41-43—“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; Oh, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’”

The goats did not fulfill the royal law; they did not fulfill Torah. They were not Torah observant. And yet, I'm going to tell you, we already know this: on that day of judgment, they'll be crying out, “Lord, Lord,” and Yeshua's response is Luke 6:46—“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”

I want you to understand, back in James 2:14, when James asks, “Can this kind of faith save him?” Is this a saving faith where they're not meeting the needs that they were in a situation they could have helped somebody? Hey, you know what, I'll pray for you. I got you. I'll say a great prayer, but you don't give them what the body needs. That faith won't save you.

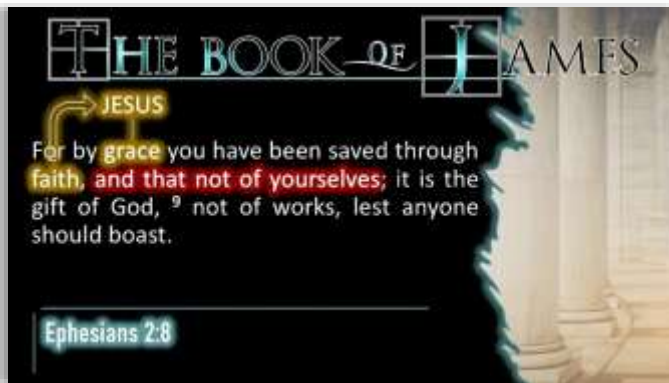
Listen to me carefully. This idea that works, *erga*, has nothing to do with salvation is a lie from the pit of hell. Everything we read in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation literally tells you the exact opposite. Works has everything to do with faith. And faith has everything to do with salvation. Make no mistake, we're being had. We're being lied to that works has no place in a salvific or salvation situation. And so, we go back to verse 17: **Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.** And you know what? You will be cast out. Let's be clear.

And so, if you're one of those believers that say, You know what, my works don't have anything to do with salvation. It really doesn't. I'm saved by faith in Christ alone. What kind of faith are we talking about? Because according to Yeshua, your works literally will keep you out of the kingdom. Someone should have told Yeshua about this reality that we're saved by cognitive faith alone, because people get in and out based on what they did or didn't do.

Going back to Paul's words in 2 Timothy, we didn't get to the point in our last message. —2 Timothy 3:16-17—**All Scripture, *pasa graphē* (πᾶσα γραφή), is given by inspiration of God;** it's God-breathed. The Torah and the Prophets are God-breathed **and is profitable for doctrine, theology, for reproof, for conviction, and for correction, for instruction in righteousness.** He's taking us to the Word, to the Torah and the Prophets, and he's telling us we need this. It's profitable for every aspect of the faith. Now listen

to what he says; this is what I want to focus on: ¹⁷ **that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped**, ah, **for every good work** (emphasis added). Every good work.

Now you have to take this in. It's not a mystery why the devil would try to unburden the church with the Torah and take the Torah away from them. When its absolute function is to convict us, to bring us, guide us, and teach us about every good work, about the things that are beautiful in the sight of Yeshua, and about the things that He hates. We need to derive from what is living and powerful. We need to be guided by His Word. And the devil says, "No, you don't." The devil wants Christians to live by the dictates of their own heart. So they're not thoroughly equipped, and they're not equipped for every good work. God have mercy.



Building on this, Paul does something so spectacular in Ephesians: he brings what I would call the full gospel and its reality. He comes out and says, you know what? — Ephesians 2:8-9—**For by grace**, and let's be clear, he's talking about Yeshua explicitly. Yeshua is the grace of God. For by Yeshua, **you have been saved through** what? **Faith** in Him. It's not random faith in some inanimate object. Yeshua saves us; through faith in Him. We got this, and then he goes on and says, Oh, **and that not of yourselves; it is the**

gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast (emphasis added). This goes back to the point I've already told you. You know what? When we, as believers, are all excited and Torah observant, but then realize the magnitude of holiness this requires, and we're told in Romans 3:23—**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**.

That leaves us back on our heels, crying out for mercy. There's nothing; I don't care about how much of the Torah I've kept. If I were to live 1000 lifetimes, and in every one of those, the majority of everything you saw was Torah observant, all these commands. Man, he was a great guy. Failing in one point keeps me out of the kingdom because our God is holy. And therefore, I, on my own merit and in my own ability, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. I need a Savior (Romans 3:23), **for all have sinned**.

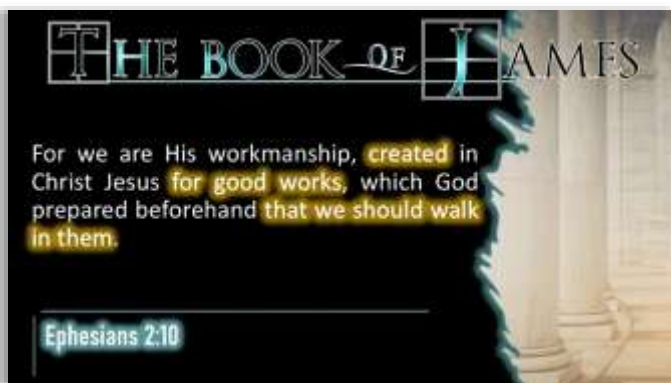
Do you understand sin is the problem? Do you understand sin separates us from God? We have to deal with the problem, and the only way to deal with that is the propitiation for sins. It's the covering. It's the whole aspect of what Yom Kippur is about. An atonement is made, and that restores the relationship. And so, there's nothing in and of myself. I can't make it into heaven of my own accord; I need a Savior. However, that is not the full testimony.

The problem is what Paul goes on to say gets left out. And that is this: Ephesians 2:10—**For we are His workmanship**, meaning we as humanity, we're the Father's workmanship **created in Christ Jesus ...** (Emphasis added). Paul explains in Colossians 1:16—**... All things were created through Him, Yeshua, and for Him, Yeshua**. We were made through Him. So, we are His creation in Yeshua for what? —Ephesians 2:10—**... for good works, which God prepared beforehand ...** (Emphasis added). That's identity, and that's purpose. Where do we find our identity and purpose? In the Torah and in the Prophets. Again, don't marvel at why the enemy would come in to take the Torah, to take our very purpose of who we're called to be. God has delivered our purpose in this life in His Word, and the enemy wants to take it.

Ephesians 2:10 is fascinating. We don't have time today to unveil this, but we'll get into it next week. God prepared these good works, which are only found in the Torah and the Prophets beforehand. This is getting into the aspect of God's Torah, the principles embedded within, and the wisdom and understanding given within the Torah were prepared long before so that when we come into the gospel of Yeshua, it's ready. We have it. That is, unless we reject it. This is purpose. This is identity. So we were literally created to walk in the Torah, and that's what Paul says in Ephesians 2:10, "... **that we should walk in them.**" (Emphasis added). We've been created for this. That's it.

Now this last part, which I will dig into a little bit here, is for Paul to use this language so that we should walk in them. This is akin explicitly to the commandments of the Torah. And we find this in Deuteronomy 8:6—"Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, **to walk in His ways...** To walk in His ways. He made His ways known to Moshe; His acts to the children of Israel. To walk in those ways is to walk in His commandments, those things that are righteous, those things that are holy. But then he ends with this: **and to fear Him** (emphasis added).

It's interesting when you go to the Dead Sea Scrolls; the Dead Sea Scrolls are earlier traditional manuscripts that predate the Masoretic text, and they have a different rendering: "**by loving Him.**" (Emphasis added). Now, does that sound familiar? We're to walk in His way, and we're to keep His commandments by loving Him. This is Yeshua's words: John 14:15—"If you love Me, keep My commandments."



So, as we look at what Paul says in Ephesians 2:10, we're **created in Christ Jesus for good works**, and we're called to **walk in them**, and these works were **prepared beforehand** (emphasis added). There's an eternal aspect to that. We're going to dig into this, as we've never dug into it before, and we're going to get some perspective on it. All of this will be instrumental as we proceed into chapter two in James, and it will bring an amazing amount of clarity.

And so, with that said, let's pray.

[Closing prayer]

Abba Father, it is an amazing thing that when we can go to Your Word, and we can hear the words of Your apostles, men like James and men like Paul, speaking with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, how it cuts us to the heart, how our delusions of grandeur are absolutely obliterated, and how our deceptions and the lies that we have believed that the enemy has spun are destroyed. And I thank You for that,

because without Your Holy Spirit of truth going forth and instructing and teaching us and telling us of things to come, we're completely lost.

And that is the beauty of the New Covenant: that You would (Acts 2:17) **pour out Your Spirit on all flesh**, on **Your sons and on Your daughters**, and You would (Hebrews 8:10) write Your ways on our hearts. We would hear Your truth, and our hearts will burn within us. We will fear You, and we will keep Your commandments.

Lord Yeshua, we are not here to boast in our righteousness. We are here to boast in Yours. And we will trust that it is only (Isaiah 53:5) **by Your stripes that we are healed**. And it's only through the power of Your Spirit that we can legitimately walk in Your Torah. It's only when we receive Your love that we can love another. We cannot give what we don't have.

And so, Lord, what I pray over this community is that love. That love that inspires others to run and not walk to the gospel, to run after You, Yeshua, to know how much You love them, and the power of Your forgiveness to restore them back to the Father.

And so, we praise Your holy name, Yeshua. The name above all names, the only name that can bring salvation. In Yeshua's name we pray. Amen.

Faith & Works: The Vital Connection

This infographic explores the 'controversial' waters of James Chapter 2, specifically addressing the misconception that grace replaces the Law. It highlights that while salvation is a gift, true faith is inseparable from the 'good works' and commandments prepared by God.

The Standard of the Law

The 'All or Nothing' Principle

Breaking even one point of the law makes a person guilty of breaking it all.
(James 2:10)



The Royal Law

To 'do well' is to fulfill the kingly command: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
(James 2:8)



Partiality is Transgression

Showing favoritism is not a minor error; it is a sin convicted by the Torah.
(James 2:9)



The Evidence of Saving Faith

Faith Without Works is Dead

Conceptual belief without action is profitless and cannot save.
(James 2:14-26)



Sheep vs. Goats

Judgment is based on how we treat the hungry, naked, and sick.
"I was hungry and you gave me food..."
(Matthew 25:31-46)



Created for Good Works

Believers are saved by grace through faith specifically to walk in God's prepared commandments.
(Ephesians 2:10)