

I SHALL NOT FORGE(T) YOUR WORD!

One of the cornerstones of our belief is the Word of Yahweh. Without the Word of Yahweh there is no certainty in life. People who try to live without the Word of Yahweh have chosen a route of hopelessness and instability. This is why the author of Tehillim 119 says repeatedly: I have treasured up Your word in my heart (11); I do not forget Your word (16); I guard Your word (17); Revive me according to Your word (25); Strengthen me according to Your word (28); Establish Your word (38); I have trusted in Your word (42); Your word has given me life (50); I have waited for Your Word (74); Your word stands firm in the heavens (89); Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (105); Support me according to Your word (116); The opening up of Your words gives light (130); Establish my footsteps by Your word (133); The sum of Your word is truth (160); At Your word my heart stood in awe (161); I rejoice at Your word (162); etc.

Let us ponder for a moment on the words of verse 160: "The sum of Your word is truth". The well known Afrikaans translation is: "Die hele inhoud van u Woord is waarheid". The meaning is quite clear: We are not supposed to divide the Word of Yahweh or remove certain parts from it or attach greater importance to certain parts than to others. Despite this very important principle (which is repeated in other parts of Pre-Messianic and Messianic Scriptures - among others Devarim 4:2; 12:32 and Revelation 22:18-19), one often hears the popular statement: "My criterion for everything I do is the New Testament, not the Old Testament (or: "I am a New Testament believer, not an Old Testament Looser").

The question arises: Is it up to us to decide which part of Scriptures we would like to follow? Do we have the proper authority to make a choice like this? Did the apostles and the early Messianic believers have a similar negative attitude towards the Pre-Messianic Scriptures? Did the Messiah Himself ever speak about the writings of Mosheh and the Prophets in a negative light? Only a little bit of Scripture investigation will reveal that neither the Messiah, nor the apostles, not even the apostle Shaul (Paul), ever tried to downplay the importance of the Pre-Messianic Scriptures. There is not the slightest suggestion that any of the true believers of whom we read in Scriptures, ever came to the conclusion that followers of the Messiah should not take seriously the written Word of Yahweh. Those who choose to come to such a conclusion today, are not following the perfect example of the Messiah or the early believers in Messiah. No, they are following a popular, man-made precept, based on the lie that Y'shua the Messiah came to do away with the writings of Mosheh and the Prophets and establish a new religion.

There are more than 500 references to the Pre-Messianic Scriptures in the Messianic writings - the great majority of which confirm the fact that these (so called "Old Testament") Scriptures are "breathed by Elohim and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for setting straight, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of Elohim might be fitted, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16-17). How can we become equipped for every good work if we listen to those who want us to believe that the Almighty has changed his mind as to what exactly a "good work" is and what not?

In Mark 12:24 we read these words: "And Y'shua answering, said to them, "Is this not why you go astray, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of Elohim?" This corresponds to what is written in YermeYahu 8:9 "See, they have rejected the Word of Yahweh, so what wisdom do they have?" To reject the Word of Yahweh, or any part of it, is to estrange oneself from the power and wisdom of the Almighty. Could this perhaps be the reason why there are thousands of people worldwide who consider themselves to be followers of the Messiah, but at the same time cannot say that they truly know the power and the wisdom of Yahweh?

Speaking to the Yehudim of his time, the Messiah said very clearly: "It is impossible for Scriptures to be broken" (Yahuchanan 10:35). This is in line with Scriptures like MattitYahu 5:18 ("till the heaven and the earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall by no means pass from the Torah") and YeshaYahu 40:8 ("grass shall wither, the flower shall fade, but the Word of our Elohim stands forever"). For reasons that are difficult to understand, many people agree completely with these

verses, but still feel compelled to cast a shadow of suspicion over what is known as the "Old Testament". If it is true that the Word of Elohim stands forever, then it must remain standing (and effective) also in the lifestyles of those who share this confession.

Shaul (Paul), who is often credited as being the one who proclaimed that the "Old Testament" is inferior and temporary and should only be seen as background and preparation for the "New Testament", declared his own position with regards to the Pre-Messianic Scriptures clearly to governor Felix in Acts 24:14 "And this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the Elohim of my fathers, believing all that has been written in the Torah and in the Prophets ..." In all of Shaul's letters one can see that this is indeed the case, as he repeatedly quoted from the Pre-Messianic Scriptures. Shaul's fellow-apostle, Kepha (Peter), gave us some insight into a tendency among people that became apparent even in those early years of Messianic belief. Many sincere people interpreted Shaul's letters in a way that was contrary to what the apostle had intended. Kepha warned that some of the things that Shaul wrote about, were difficult to understand and that there were certain untaught and unstable people around who twisted Shaul's writings "to their own destruction, as they do also the other Scriptures" (2 Kepha 3:16). These words come as a clear warning, even to us, today.

Let us not fall into the trap of cutting and pasting the Word of Yahweh. Let us not alienate ourselves from the rich and resourceful heritage of the Word "that will remain for ever". Let us not allow tradition to take away from us something that was meant to be a blessing, not a burden. The words "forget" and "forge" are almost the same - in spelling and in practical meaning. To forget the Word of Yahweh - even just a certain part of it - is only the first step of a process that will almost certainly follow: to forge the Word of the Almighty and presenting in its place a counterfeit that will most definitely not have the same life-changing effect as the original!