

The Christian Torah

Sitting at the Feet of Yeshua

Today, we begin a new adventure. This series is based on a teaching series I delivered several years ago while actively involved with a Messianic Jewish Congregation ~ Lev L'Yisrael (Heart for Israel).

We will be sitting at the feet of Yeshua and listening to Him as He taught His talmidim. At first, we will be focusing on the five main discourses that are recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. Inter-woven with looking at Matthew, I will also be teaching on what it means to actually be a talmid of Yeshua.

Some of you may be wondering why the Gospel of Matthew? Well the "Word in Life Study Bible" calls the Gospel of Matthew the "Christian Torah." Matthew balances the teaching of Yeshua with the application of that truth in day-to-day life. Matthew builds his material around five major speeches that Yeshua gave, producing a sort of five-volume "Christian Torah."

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| Matthew 5:1 – 7:27 | The Sermon on the Mount |
| Matthew 9:35 – 10:42 | Instructions to the Twelve Emissaries |
| Matthew 13:1 – 52 | Parables of the Kingdom |
| Matthew 18:1 – 35 | Instructions on Community |
| Matthew 24:1 – 25:46 | The Olivet Discourse |

For centuries, the Jewish people had waited for a Messiah. They based their expectations on numerous promises in the Tanakh. Through the prophets, God renewed His pledge and provided details about the One who would fulfill it. Over the years, various figures came and went, some claiming to be the promised Messiah. But none proved convincing. None quite fulfilled the expectations of the religious scholars or the people, but what about this Rabbi, Yeshua from Natzeret?

He claimed to be God's Son. He performed extraordinary miracles that seemed to indicate divine power. He also taught with unprecedented authority and attracted a devoted band of followers. Yet hadn't the nation's leaders rejected him? Didn't He die a criminal's death? How, then did He fulfill the promises of God? Was He really Israel's Messiah?

Matthew's Gospel answers with a resounding YES! Matthew fills his account with prophecies from the Tanakh that point to Yeshua as God's Chosen One. He wants his fellow Jews to study their Scriptures and find Yeshua to be the Messiah, the Son of David, the Son of Avraham, and the Son of God. Matthew's Gospel was written with a Jewish accent – and that is why I want to examine its contents.

But rather than starting from the beginning, let's start at the end:

"Yeshua came and talked with them [the eleven remaining talmidim]. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make people from all nations into talmidim, immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the Ruach HaKodesh, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember! I will be with you always, yes, even until the end of the age'" ~ Matthew 28:18-20.

What does it mean to "make people from all nations into talmidim?" What is a talmid? A biblical talmid is:

1. One who is **following** the Messiah – has made Yeshua the Lord of their life. (Luke 9:3; John 8:31)
2. One who is **being changed** by the Messiah – is becoming like the Messiah in attitude and action. (John 15:8; Romans 8:29, Galatians 4:19; 5:22-23; John 13:35)
3. One who is **committed** to the Mission of the Messiah. (Messiah's mission is to save a lost world by installing a ministry of reconciliation.) (John 15:8; Matthew 4:19; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20)

This passage at the end of Matthew's Gospel is called the "Great Commission." Yet in reality, it is more the *great failure* of the church! This is the main call to the church from our Lord and Savior, and it is the one thing most churches don't do at all! Some churches do a great job with evangelism, but once the people come in, they are *stored* in the pews. Being a talmid encompasses more than just asking Yeshua into our heart, and goes far beyond baptism. Our conversion, our acceptance of Yeshua as Savior, is the beginning of our walk. It does not stop there! It starts there! I want to help train up Biblical talmidim. Can I get an AMEN?

God does not ask us **to seek** converts, He simply asks us **to do** discipleship. Discipleship is **modeling** and **teaching** Believers the precepts of the Bible - mainly prayer, Bible study, righteous living, and worship. Yes, we are still to evangelize, but that is not our main mission and call! When we evangelize, we must realize that it is the role of the Ruach HaKodesh to bring people into an intimate relationship with God. This is an act of divine intervention and grace. He uses us as the tools, but He is the means! We are to care, and share with others His love and character. We obey and reach, but we cannot lead people anywhere. He is the One who leads!

I want to emphasize that we will examine Yeshua's teaching very deliberately. I'm in no hurry to get through this. I want my readership to be able to thoroughly understand and digest what He has to say to us as His talmidim. The whole purpose of this study is for us to become **changed** by a fresh impartation of His Ruach HaKodesh.

I must also add that I enter into this time with some fear and trepidation. Who am I to stand before you and attempt to make plain His teachings? I would ask that you continually pray for me for wisdom and discernment as I study His word and rightly divide it.

In my next post, we will begin our exploration of by examining the Sermon on the Mount.