



MISHPAT V'CHESED MINISTRIES

Foundations of the Faith

The chronological scope which has been revealed to us in the Bible begins at the creation of the earth, the seas, the animals, the sun, moon, and stars, and last but certainly not least, man and woman - mankind. Elohim (God) is from everlasting to everlasting, however, and thus we don't know what He was doing before the creation of earth, though we can dream! Likewise, the revealed scriptures end with a new heaven and new earth - in which righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:13). And who knows what all Elohim and us will be doing for eternity, but it will be great! In between the creation and the new creation we find ourselves, awaiting the redemption of our bodies from sin and death.

Yes, the next major event after creation was the fall of mankind as they sinned and this brought death on themselves and humanity. The serpent was cursed, woman was cursed with painful childbirth, and man was cursed with toilsome labor. Thus, from that time on, there was now a dichotomy in the world - obedience to Yahweh or disobedience to Him, righteousness or sinfulness, although all men since Adam are born into death and sin (Romans 5:12).

The next major event, after Elohim judges the world with the flood, is the forming of the people of Israel - a special people chosen by Elohim to receive His righteous law, or instruction - Torah - that reveals what sin is (Romans 7:7). Israel's father was Abraham, the father also of all who are justified by faith, but whose faith leads them to action, confirming the validity of their faith to begin with. Abraham sets the example of "believing El (God)" and being justified (declared righteous) on account of that faith - (his belief was credited to him as righteousness). But, in the book of James, actually Jacob, if you render the word true to the Greek, we see that Abraham was also justified by his works - being obedient to offer Isaac up - although Elohim saved Isaac. His faith was perfected by his works (James 2:20-24). It is a great paradox - faith saves you, but true faith will produce works that confirm this saving. The faith does come first though - we can't just start piling up a list of deeds and expect to be justified by them. We are justified by coming under Elohim's will - hearing, believing, and doing - making Him Lord.

So, the Law is given to Israel later on Mt. Sinai, which Yeshua says will not pass away, at least until heaven and earth passes away. It sets the standard for what sin is, beginning with the 10 commandments. Yet some of the instruction given was time sensitive - Yahweh is not asking us today to go build a tabernacle like they were instructed to build one then. And so other parts of the Instruction, or Torah, could be time sensitive as well - for example, certain ethnicities were not allowed to come in the congregation of Yahweh because of their ill conduct, but light of John 3:16 we know the whole world is invited to come and taste of Elohim's salvation. Just an example. This is something I am still wrestling with - what is time-sensitive, what is not. Anyhow, now through one man - Abraham, that grew into a family, and then a nation - Israel, Elohim now

established a light in the world for what righteousness looks like - or is supposed to look like. Strangers are welcome to be considered just like native born Israelites, though - Leviticus 24:22, and in the new Testament we see gentiles grafted into the Jewish olive tree.

And so Israel continues, sometimes following Yahweh, sometimes not, sometimes in exile, sometimes in the promised land, until Yeshua (Jesus) is born under Roman rule - the One who will fulfill the Law, and reverse the curse of death that sin brought, and give us everlasting righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). In His sermon on the mount, He affirms that the Law is good and will not pass away until heaven and earth do, and that people who keep it will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. The Apostle Paul backs this up too in his letter to the Romans, where he calls the Law "holy," "just," and "good." Paul also speaks of the curse of the law, but this must be the curse of death for not keeping the Law, because he already said it is holy and good, and that the real problem is really us sinning, breaking the Law, not the Law itself (Romans 7:13).

And so Messiah (Christ - the Anointed One) takes our sin upon Him on the stake (perhaps mistakenly called a cross - another study!), paying the death penalty for us, so we can be justified and again have Elohim's perfect righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21 - He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of Elohim in Him). Praise Yeshua!

And so, we as believers in Yeshua carry in us the first-fruits of new life that will be fulfilled when we are resurrected. We are justified by our faith in Yeshua, like Abraham, and yet as Yeshua urges the assembly in Thyatira, we are to hold fast what we have, and keep Yeshua's works until the end. Again - the paradox - justified by faith, but by works also - the perfection of our faith.

So we await the final judgments which are to come to the earth spoken of in Revelation - the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls, in which the wrath of Elohim is fulfilled. Men are wicked, and His wrath is just. Whether we are raptured to heaven before tribulation or protected on earth, I do not know, but after the tribulation, presumably, Messiah Yeshua comes on His white horse followed by the armies of heaven on white horses and defeats the evil armies on earth. Then comes His 1,000 year rule with resurrected martyrs, when Satan is locked up. Then Satan is released to deceive the nations and gather them against the "beloved city" and "camp of the saints," (presumably Jerusalem), yet Elohim reigns fire from heaven on these enemies. Then, all the dead are raised for the final great white throne judgment, in which people are judged according to their works, and those not in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire.

At last, the New Heaven and New Earth can come, accompanied by the New Jerusalem, in which Elohim will dwell with men and wipe away every tear. Beyond this, I don't know what will come, but it will be glorious.

And so we wait for the fulfillment of all things, calling on men to repent and believe in Yeshua, and walk uprightly according to the Law, having received the love of the Father.

And if you have not trusted in Yeshua (Jesus) as your savior, I invite you to do so in repentance from sin - breaking the Law, calling on the name of Yahweh (the LORD), receiving His gift of salvation - forgiveness and eternal life, because He took your sins on the cross.

If you still have questions, seek the truth, and you will find.

Shalom (Peace),

-Greg Wilson