

Titus Part 1: Backdrop; Paul's Introductions; The Structure of the Faith: Belief and Works. Chapter 1:1

The following text is based on a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph.

***Portions of this sermon message have been edited to better transcribe the message. All verses from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.**

Today we're actually going to start a new study and this is going to be on the book of Titus. Now traditionally this book has been identified as a pastoral epistle. And actually, it's part of a trilogy—1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and then Titus being the third book. These books collectively are considered to be the pastoral epistles. As we get deeper into the book of Titus, you'll appreciate why it bears a pastoral epistle title.

Now before we break into this book, I want to establish some groundwork to get a feel for the environment or the backdrop of it all. I don't know about you, but when I enter into a study of a book, I want to get my bearings, I want to understand my surroundings, and I want to have a mental landscape and backdrop so that I understand. I want to understand what is going on with historical context because it draws me in. When you get drawn into the story or book, you're going to draw more out of it when you understand the historical context.

So we're going to be asking the questions today—who, what, when, where, and why. In other words, who wrote this epistle? What we know is this, and there's no question about it because this is not something that's debated at all, the authorship belongs to the Apostle Paul. We see this right away at the head of the document itself. And when we ask the question, "To whom was it written?" we find that it was actually written to a Gentile named Titus. Now the thing that's less certain about this is when it was written. The experts estimate between the years sixty-two and sixty-five A.D.

This should stop you in your tracks when you know that this epistle was written at this time; you need to understand something. There's a lot going on in history at this moment. You know the sixties are getting crazy. They're getting intense; and I'm not talking about the 1960's, which would apply, but the sixties in the first century were really crazy. It's getting intense. You think about some things that are happened in sixty-two. Pompeii was devastated by a massive earthquake that is still talked about today.

So when you think about these things, remember what Yeshua said in Matthew 24:7—⁷ **For nation will rise against nation...and there will be...earthquakes in various places.** Keep in mind that when Yeshua said that, and as we're into the sixty's, and the Apostles are going forth with the gospel, they believe they are in the last days. So they're experiencing things, and it appears that the world's coming to an end. Go back to Matthew 24. Yeshua said something else in there that is profound and ties in here. He said that the gospel is to go out to all nations, and then the end will come. What is happening in the sixties? The gospel is going out to all the nations. It is a very, very intense time.

Let me build upon that. Nero is the emperor of Rome. This is his timetable. This is when Nero is ruling Rome. Why does that matter? What does that have to do with our study? It has a lot to do with the study.

It is in sixty-four A.D. that there's a great fire in Rome. The ironic thing is that Nero was suspected to blame for this great fire. What did Nero do? He put the blame on the Christians. I want you to understand something—this time table under Emperor Nero, this is when the great persecution arose against Christianity. And let me be very clear, who made up the majority of Christianity? Messianic Jews. This is when the great persecution arose, and it lasted for hundreds of years. It's not until Constantine that there is relief. So this is an epic time in history when this epistle is being written.

I want to dig into this a little bit before we go forward. I want to take you to Tacitus. And if any of you are not familiar with Tacitus, he is a Roman historian. He is one of the most prolific Roman historians ever. He is not a Christian; he is not tied in any way to the faith. He is a complete pagan; he is a Roman, but he has left us a lot of historical accounts.

I want to share a piece of his historical account with you that corroborates exactly what I'm telling you. This is the excerpt from Tacitus' work— *but all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the Emperor [Nero] and the propitiation of the gods [Romans gods], did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration [fire in about sixty four A.D.] maybe was the result of an order. Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastens the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations. They are called Christians by the populace.*

Let's break this down; this is what he says—but all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the Emperor [Nero] and the propitiation of the gods [Romans gods], did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration [fire in about sixty four A.D.] maybe was the result of an order. So here what Tacitus is saying is that the word on the street is that Nero gave the order to burn Rome. Has that ever happened before? Perhaps Hitler?

Continuing—*Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastens the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations. Who are they? They are called Christians by the populace.* I want you to understand something here that is amazing. Tacitus is a secular historian and this is a secular account, and he mentions these Christians. This has nothing to do with Scripture. It is not tied to faith. This is totally secular. He identifies Christians in this totally secular account. This is amazing! But not just that, he says they're hated for what? They're hated for their abomination. What is he referring to? He's referring to the fact that the Christians were holding fast to something known as the Kingdom of God, and there is another king other than Caesar—Nero. That idea is an abomination to the Romans. So we start to see this unfold here. It's amazing that this is getting inflicted upon them.

We continue on— *Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome.* In this sentence Tacitus uses the word Christus, which in the Greek means Christ and is referring to Yeshua. Are you sitting down? Do you understand that we're reading a secular document that is confirming the existence of our Messiah? It's powerful, and it corroborated everything that we read and believe in the New Testament. People try to tell us it's a lie. Well, this is secular history. Tacitus has no ties to Yeshua whatsoever, to Christ, and here he comes out and makes this statement— *Christus, from whom the name had its origin.* In other words, the origin of the name that Christians have is from Christ. That's where they got it.

Continuing on—*[Christ] suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators Pontius Pilatus [Pilate].* This is secular documentation of the crucifixion of Yeshua. It's right here.

Continuing on—and a most mischievous superstition, obviously referring to the fact that Yeshua is proclaiming to be someone great and be the king of some Kingdom, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome. Now do you understand what he just said? When pilot killed him, this Christianity seemed to squelch; it seemed to die out for a moment. But then all of a sudden, he says, there was an explosion of the faith. The faith went out again, and he said it had even reached Rome. Why would that be? It is because of the resurrection; because of the gospel. The very reason we're here today is because of the gospel of Yeshua in that Yeshua rose from the dead. Powerful! And this is coming from secular eyes as he sees it.

The next part—where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular. I will explain this sentence. Where all things, he's referring to Rome, hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular. I agree with that.

Moving on to the last part—Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Think about what was just said here. You better learn your history, because if you're reading this appropriately, you'll realize that we are living in this same environment today. Tacitus is saying that the Christians that were immediately getting blamed for this fire, it wasn't about the fire. The context is—we [Romans] weren't putting blame on them because we hate them; Christians are haters of mankind. Does this sound familiar? When I don't go along with the agenda that says unless I tell a woman she can kill innocent children because she has the right to, I'm a hater. I'm a racist. I'm a bigot. I don't go along with that agenda because I care about innocent children. Isn't that interesting?

This is exactly what Rome did to the Christians. If I don't go along with gay marriage, I'm a hater. If you don't go along with the system, the status quo, you're a hater against mankind. This is nothing new. What we are seeing in this country right now is nothing new. The same thing happened to the Messianic believers in the first century, and what does it tell you? I said this before, and I'll say it again—we are on the brink of persecution. If you are not solid in your faith, you are not going to make it; you will compromise. Unless you are confronted with the reality that you need to pick up your cross and follow Yeshua, you will fall. This is reality!

We continue on—Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beast, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination when daylight has expired.¹ I hope that you can understand that the way Rome decided to light up the night so that they could see was by burning Christians alive. This is how they did it.

So this backdrop of what's happening here is critically important when we go into the book of Titus which is written right at this time. It tells you something—Satan went out; he was enraged against the woman who is the believers in Yeshua. And because the gospel was going to the four corners of the earth, Satan was livid; his kingdom was under attack. When you bring the gospel of Yeshua into play, you're destroying the kingdom of Satan. It is total, all out war! This is intense. So Paul knows Satan is on the move. He is on the heels of the gospel, and he's coming to destroy it. Paul knows this.

Moving on to ask the question—where was this letter written? We don't know where Paul was when he wrote it. But we do know where he sent it. And that was to the Island of Crete. And the interesting thing about Crete is that we definitely know that there was a semblance, even if it's minimal, of the faith there even before this letter to Titus was written.

Now why do I say that? Because when you go to Acts 2, you read about the Shavuot event [Pentecost]. The Ruach HaKodesh [Holy Spirit] comes down, and there are men from every nation there. There are Jews from every nation under heaven and they hear the wonderful works of God in their own native language. Go back and read the events and you'll read that some of the men who were there were called Cretins. They were from Crete. So you think about the three thousand that were added that day. Now we have no idea how many from Crete actually accepted the Messiah and were baptized. But the Cretins who were baptized went back home and brought the faith with them. So this is just a look at this so we can see a little bit of history behind Crete.

But now we get to the point—what is it about, and why is it written? When I take you through the history and show you this persecution arising and going out, then you know exactly why it's written. It's written to strengthen and establish the churches. You're going to find out that the churches in Crete are fragmented and unstructured; therefore, they are spiritually exposed. And Paul is fearful for this because he wants them strong; he knows the attacks of the enemy, and he knows that they're under attack. So he says he is literally sending this epistle to Titus to set these things in order. "Titus," Paul says, "get them strong; get them where they need to be." We need to have order and structure so that we can withstand the wiles of the devil.

So that pretty much sums up the who, what, when, where, and why. With that out of the way, I want to get into the epistle. We're going to go to Titus 1:1, and this is what we read—¹ Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Yeshua HaMashiach. This is a pretty traditional introduction for Paul. When you read through the first verse or two of any of Paul's epistles, you'll find that this is how he introduces himself. And why does that matter? Why do you need to take special note of this? Because there's a specific way or identity that Paul relates to. There is something that he always wants to make sure that his audience is aware of.

When you think about it, he could have started his epistles any other way. He could have simply said—I'm Paul of Tarsus. Why not start that way? That is a good introduction, and it is accurate. Right? Or why not start with this—Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee. That would be an amazing introduction. And think about this—Paul is revered among his own people, the Jewish people, for these reasons—he is highly decorated. It's credibility and would make sense that he would introduce himself in all his epistles this way, but he doesn't. He introduces himself as a bondservant of Elohim, a servant of Yeshua.

I want to tell you something that happened many years back. One of the things that I did that really drew my attention was to seek out how Paul introduces himself. I went to all his epistles and laid them all out. I put all these introductions side by side; I just studied them and poured over them. To me, it tells me a lot about somebody as to how they introduce themselves. I learned a lot about the Apostle Paul in regard to how and what he values in his identity or how he identifies himself.

The Apostle Paul has ministered to me personally, to my heart, in a very, very powerful way just by his introductions, because he told me he has established his identity in Christ, in Mashiach. And that spoke volumes to me in that we don't regard the acts of the flesh or the things that we've been given according to the flesh. If that were the case, Paul would boast better than all of us because of who he was in the flesh, which was awesome. And yet his identity was in Yeshua. Do you know what that has done for me and taught me? That my identity is in Yeshua. Period! That's where the power is; he could not employ a more powerful introduction than what he just did, and what he does in his epistles.

Now there's something else worth mentioning here about this introductions, and it really adds some flair or drama if you will. We find that Paul is weaving the Father together with the Son. He is weaving

this beautiful, unified tapestry where the Father and Yeshua are *echad* [One], and Paul's allegiance is to Them. I'm going to say that again. Paul's allegiance is to Them.

Do you remember the words that Yeshua spoke in Matthew 6:24—**No one can serve two masters?** You cannot do it. Go through all of Paul's epistles and read them, and you will find that they all read similar to this. All of them do. In Paul's epistles, you have the Father being mentioned, and Paul is a bondservant of God and of Yeshua. I mean this is really, really powerful!

If you're considering and have issues with the deity of Yeshua, you need to go through Paul's salutations in all of his epistles. What you're going to discover is that he is very, very careful to present Yeshua as one with the Father, or Yeshua receiving the same glory and honor that the Father receives. In fact, at times when you take this a step further, what you're going to find is that the Apostle Paul transposes specific terms that he applies to HaShem [God], and he applies those terms to Yeshua.

Looking at Titus 1:1 we read—¹**Paul a bondservant of God.** OK? Now you go to Philippians 1:1 and it says this—**Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Yeshua HaMashiach.** In Titus, Paul is a bondservant of HaShem; in Philippians 1:1, a bondservant to Yeshua HaMashiach. Remember— **No one can serve two masters.**

He's talking about the status of a bondservant; he is a servant, and a servant has a master. All throughout this we find that the Father and the Son are God. They are One. This is a powerful concept. In fact, when you take it a step further, when you look at all of Paul's prologues throughout his epistles, he consistently hammers a particular theme home again and again. I wanted to put them all up here [on the screen]. I just couldn't fit anymore on it, so I just put what I could fit.

1 Corinthians 1:3—³**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

2 Corinthians 1:2—²**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Galatians 1:3—³**Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Ephesians 1:2—²**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Look at the words on the screen. They are virtually identical. He says these things in all these various epistles—**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Yeshua HaMashiach.** Paul says—**grace and peace come through HaShem,** through Elohim, and then he says— **and through the Lord Yeshua HaMashiach.**

Are we picking up on what he is doing here? This is powerful! This is a massive revelation that reveals that creation is the Father working through His Son! We know redemption, grace, and peace being brought to the world were the Father through the Son, and we know judgment is coming from the Father through the Son. This is powerful! These prologues make it to the head of all these documents that we have in our New Testament. It's a powerful, powerful message!

With that said, I want to take you back to Titus 1:1, and we're going to continue on. It says—¹**Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Yeshua HaMashiach according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness.** You need to step back for a moment and just look at this. What do you see? There's a particular class I'm teaching right now, and I am attempting to hammer home a very critical point in this class, and what is that? That is the structure of the faith. You step back and you see the structure of the faith.

We're looking at his introduction, and I have got to tell you something. The "structure of the faith" works like this—once your eyes are open to the concept and you understand it you'll see it everywhere

in Scripture. It's unbelievable! It's kind of like when you buy a car you have never had before; you have never owned that make and model. You start driving around and pretty soon you realize, wow, there are a lot of people with the same car. I notice it everywhere. Right? All these cars were there before, but you never saw them; you never noticed them. It wasn't until the revelation, until it became real to you, and until you started driving the same type of car. You see clearly. The "structure of the faith" works exactly like that. And once you understand it, then you notice it everywhere.

Let me say this for those of you who don't know what I'm talking about. If you haven't been with me long enough, and you really don't know what the "structure of the faith" is, it is simply a title that I am utilizing to describe or define biblical faith.

Let me take you to the book of James because James is going to describe this "structure of the faith" quite well. I want you to see this in James 2:14—¹⁴ **What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?** He's talking about a conceptual faith here. One that only resides in one's mind or head. There's a faith in which I can say in my mind—I believe; I believe this. James is asking the question—can that conceptual faith save you? It's a rhetorical question because conceptual faith cannot save you.

Now let's continue. James, being the excellent teacher that he is, is going to explain this by giving us an example—¹⁵ **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?** If you don't have works, righteous acts, if you do not love your neighbor as yourself, your faith is dead. This is what James is saying. And then he goes on to give this conclusion—¹⁷ **Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.** It's not faith.

So here's where we get into this title—the structure of the faith. What James just explained is the structure of the faith. Look at it this way—faith is belief in Yeshua and works, righteous works, or obedience to God's commandments. That's what faith is. This is the structure of the faith. Again, you know I hammer this point home all the time—according to the Torah, Scripture, all things are established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. And you can see this woven throughout the tapestry of the universe. Yeshua sent out His disciples two by two. It was not a coincidence. The gospel was being established. Right? Think about our sky and how the earth is governed. It's governed by two lights, a greater light and a lesser light. In other words, the sun and the moon. Right? And our day, one day, consist of the testimony of two—the evening and the morning are the first day. And we could go on. So this is testimony of witnesses.

You think about life. You cannot have a life unless you bring a male and female, a husband and wife, together as the testimony of two. And then bam, life is created. All things are created on the testimony of two. Going back to this last point that I was making and this prologue—even God Himself has chosen to establish Himself on the testimony of two and three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Just look at the evidence that tells you that when He created, He created through Yeshua. Right? When He redeemed us people, the Father did it through His Son and judgment. These are the three pinnacle moments because all things are established on the testimony of two or three. This entire age can be broken up into three components. I mean it's unbelievable! We could do this all day long. My point is that the faith itself is established on the testimony of two. Everything that you can eat is established on the testimony of two; if they're in the sea—it has to have fins and scales. If they're on land, they have to have cloven hooves and chew the cud. Everything is established on the testimony of two.

Going back to James 2:18—¹⁸ **But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.** ¹⁹ **You believe that there is one God.**

You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! A good modern interpretation of what James just said might be this— well, whoop-de-do. Go pat yourself on the back. He just totally takes the wind out of my sails when he tells me even the demons believe. And what do I know about the demons? Why does he use demons? They've been condemned to death. There is no hope for these demons. They're literally products of iniquity. They're children of disobedience. This is absolutely amazing!

So this conceptual idea that we can have belief in our mind and that is the extent of faith doesn't work. Our end will be like that of the demons. So faith is not a conceptual idea. It's a way of life in the choices you make and the things that you do. That is the issue Yeshua talks about in Matthew 7:16—**¹You will know them by their fruit.** It is interesting that He says it is by their fruit or their actions; it is the things that they do and not just the things they say. It is the things they go forth and do.

I want to give you a real life example of the structure of the faith, and I think it's really going to hit home. It's in the life of Cain. I think everyone is pretty familiar with that story. In Genesis 4:3, we read this—**³And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.** I want to be very clear; Cain doesn't have any issue with conceptual faith. Cain believes in the Lord; he believes that Elohim created his mother and father who are Adam and Eve. There's no issue here. He's so believes that Elohim is the Lord that he has brought an offering. You don't bring an offering to someone you don't believe in. Cain's issue has nothing to do with belief in God. Think about that.

We are moving on to Genesis 4:4—**⁴Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.** I have got to stop right here. Isn't that interesting? Here we're seeing the eternal nature of Torah. Abel is bringing as an offering the first-born of his flock. Here we see the eternal nature of Torah long before it's ever revealed at Mount Sinai. One of the things that the Lord revealed as the Israelites were coming out of Egypt, before Mount Sinai, was that they were going to sanctify all the firstborn of both man and beast. They are mine, He says. OK? It pleases the Lord to have that sacrifice; He wanted the firstborn of the flock. Isn't it amazing that Abel is making that offering? That just proves the eternal nature of the Torah; the Torah is God's character—His ways, His likes, and His dislikes. And here Abel is fulfilling what pleases the Lord. That is a powerful concept!

The verse continues—**and the Lord respected Abel in his offering.** God respected it; Abel did what pleased the Lord; however, not so much for Cain—**⁵but He did not respect Cain and his offering.**

Now it's always interesting; there are all sorts of ideas as to why the Lord didn't respect Cain in his offering. Some would say that what he should have brought should have been of the first-born of his flock. That would have been a greater sacrifice, and I agree with that. There's a very real element there. However, we've got to go deeper.

If you go to Proverbs 15: 8—**⁸The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.** The wicked can bring their offering, but it will not be respected; it will not be acknowledged, and that is the case that we have going on right now with Cain. He has wickedness in his heart; he does not do the things that please the Lord. How this whole scenario is unfolding is evidence of this. Listen to how Cain responds—**⁵And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. ⁶So the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door.** This gets into righteousness and walking out what pleases the Lord by doing the things that please Him and doing the things that make Him happy. Think about this—God doesn't say that if you think really hard in your mind that I exist, this is going to pan out just fine. You have to do well. If you don't, you're cast off.

This montra exists today: the devil has come in and seduced the church telling them it doesn't matter what they do because their works won't save them. Again, the montra is that works have nothing to do with salvation. You are deceived twelve ways from Sunday if you believe that because everything in Scripture that I read tells me the exact opposite.

And so here He says that if you don't do well, sin lies at the door. It's fascinating to me that Yeshua uses the exact same imagery here of being at the door. In Revelation 3:20 He says—²⁰ **Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.** But if we don't do well, and we don't hear Yeshua at that door, then we are left with our sin. And here's the interesting thing, as it continues it says—⁷ **And its desire is for you.** The transliteration of the Hebrew word for repent is *teshuvah*; the word used here is *těshuwqah* which means desire.

Sin is longing for you. Sin cries out for you. It needs you. It is attracted to you. It is coming for you. I can guarantee it is coming for you, but I love this part. This is what the Lord says in Genesis 4:7— **but you should rule over it.** We are to rule, *masal* in the Hebrew. It literally means we are to govern; we are to have dominion. In fact, that's how it's translated at times—dominion.

Think about what the Apostle Paul is the saying in Roman 6:14—¹⁴ **For sin shall not have dominion over you.** It goes right back to Abel and Cain and right back to—**sin is not to have dominion over you.** He goes on— **for you are not under law but under grace.** ¹⁵ **What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!** Paul knows this. He knows the human flesh; he knows the human nature. He knows that when he says that we're not under law we're under grace, we're just going to take that as approval to go and sin. And so he adds verse fifteen thereby not allowing you to go to that place. So Cain is a simple point; he's a perfect example of what James is talking about in regard to having faith but not having the righteous works to support that faith. Therefore, his faith isn't faith because faith without works results in death. Amen? Looking at the story kind of puts a whole different light on what you think of works based righteousness— sacrifice. All of these things really put it in perspective.

Let me take you back to the book of James. There is one more thing I want to cover there, and actually I want to give James an opportunity to give his own example. I took you to Cain, and I would call this a negative example because Cain didn't do this right; he failed. I want to show you what James' example is because he gives us a positive example. And frankly, he couldn't have picked a better example. And this is what he says starting in James 2:20— ²⁰ **But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?** ²¹ **Was not Abraham our father justified by works...?** Just stop and think what he said. This concept is anathema [a thing or person detested or loathed] to the Church. He was justified by works. If you get this concept of the structure of the faith, it is going to change the way you download the Word of God. Do you know why I say that? Because I immediately get this flood of thoughts in my head of all these different things.

When we read the Apostle Paul, we enter treacherous waters. And I say treacherous waters because that's what Peter alludes to in 2 Peter 3:16—**which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.** When you enter into the epistles of Paul, you enter into treacherous waters, and you don't survive those waters unless you understand the structure of the faith. Why is this? Because there are times when Paul looks like he is explicitly saying the law is obliterated; it's completely gone. And there are other times that Paul is telling me that I'm to establish the law. That sounds crazy! And then the flesh makes the decision—well, I don't understand the dynamics of how these two can be, so I'll choose this one, the law is gone. And you think about how he talks about works; however, explicit works cannot save you. But then at other times, like in his letter to

the Ephesians, he's telling me that I was designed for the express purpose of good works. Do you see how crazy that sounds? He sounds insane unless you have this concept of the "structure of the faith" where you understand that faith without works is dead.

If I attempt to jump into the Orthodox Judaism camp, and I take away faith in Yeshua, I am just left with works. That is not faith. But let me jump on the other side of the tracks into Christianity. I have got faith, but I take away righteousness and works. That is not faith. It's right down the middle. It's Messianic Judaism. It's calling upon the name of Yeshua and walking in His righteousness, fearing God, and keeping His commandments as stated in Ecclesiastes 12:13. That's what it is.

And so James sounds absolutely insane here in James 2:21— ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? In other words, it's made complete; you complete it. You complete the thought. You know, when I think I want to go home from a long day, that's great. I can think about it all the time, but until I get in the car and actually go home, that thought or desire doesn't mean beans. Right?

Continuing on in James 2:23— ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled. I want to stop right there because you know sometimes we just blow by things that they're saying. The Apostles James and the Apostle Paul were ever so careful about conveying their ideas. James stops right here and says that the Scripture was fulfilled. What does he mean by that? Well, he's going to take us back to Genesis 15:6 right now and explain how this faith is made perfect. It says— "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. What is James talking about?

Some of you are still lost; you still aren't making the connection. I want to take it a step further and lay this out simplistically so that we understand this. I'm going to take you back to Genesis 5:15. I want to show you this— ⁵ Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Keep this in mind; the concept is in Abraham's mind. This is called conceptual belief. OK? But when he walks outside, the Lord makes this declaration— I'm going to make your descendants as the stars. He has Abraham looking up because this is the imagery that He wants Abraham to have. So Abraham looks up, and in his heart which the Lord knows, Abraham believes Him. That's conceptual faith! That's beautiful!

That isn't the end of the story. It didn't end there and then all of the sudden, proof, God confirmed it. The Lord had not confirmed that promise yet. Here He had counted it to Abraham for righteousness; however, that promise is not confirmed yet. Not until we go to Genesis 22, which is what James picked up on in regard to the sacrifice of Isaac. The Lord told Abraham— ²² Go. You're going to sacrifice your son. Sounds crazy! I don't care who you are! That's insane! And there are times when you go to the Word, and you look at it and think, that's just stupid. You know Christians look at these things that we in the Messianic Faith do, beautiful things that we embrace because they are found in Torah, and they think we are absolutely nuts. You're not going to eat bacon? That's crazy! That just sounds so off the wall.

Well think about Abraham. God commanded him to sacrifice his son Isaac and then what happens? This is what we read in Genesis 22:15-17— ¹⁵ Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶ and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— ¹⁷ blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply

your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. It was only because Abraham's faith was confirmed with obedience to God's commandment, literally to His voice. That's when He confirmed the promise. I mean this is amazing!

Jumping ahead to Genesis 26:4-5 where the Lord is speaking to Isaac. Listen to what He says— ⁴ And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵ because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws [Torah].

That's why. It even says this in these verses in case you were unclear about it before. As you come to Genesis 26, the reason the Lord established his covenant with Abraham is made clear, and He's going to bring it to pass because Abraham passed the test. He passed the test.

Think about that. What happened to the children of Israel when they were in Egypt? They were in bondage to Pharaoh who is representative of HaSatan [Satan]. Right? Do you know that all these plagues start falling down from God, yet Pharaoh still doesn't release the Israelites? Despite the power of God being displayed, it is not until the Lamb's blood was shed that Pharaoh released them. And when the Lamb's blood is shed, what happens? They are released from bondage and sent out. That's the power of Yeshua; that's the blood of Yeshua setting us free from bondage. But is that the end of the story? Did they all of the sudden magically appear in the Promised Land? Was it like—I put the Lamb's blood on the door and the next thing I know I am eating grapes in my mansion? It didn't happen like that; you need to follow the story.

It's the structure of the faith. The whole Passover story is about the Lamb's blood that was shed, and then God takes them out into a wilderness; they didn't go into the Promised Land right away. He takes them out into the middle of nowhere and allows them to hunger and thirst in order to test them to see whether they would keep His commandments or not. Do you see what I'm saying? Confirm the faith and guess what? The only people that went into the Promised Land are the ones who held their ground. They held fast; they believed in the Lord. They kept his commandments.

I want to move on. I want to give you just a few brief examples before we close today. I want to give you some examples of the structure of the faith. I want this to inspire you because once you know what to look for; you see it's everywhere. This principle is all over Scriptures. And once you have this locked and loaded, you are going to be able to be an amazing light to believers. You will be able to help them understand this craziness where in one point it sounds like Paul is crazy insane stating that the law is done away with. Yet in another point, it sounds like he's telling us to be obedient. This will help. We go to Jeremiah 17:7-8— ⁷ Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. Who what? Trust in the Lord. I mean this is who is blessed, those who believe. Right? And look at the promise that lies with it— ⁸ For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit. Have you got it? You have believed in the Lord and you are blessed, and you're going to be like a tree planted by the waters.

Let me take you to Psalm 1:1-2— ¹ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.

When I go to Jeremiah 17:7-8, I'm told that I'm blessed if I believe in the Lord; I am blessed if I trust in him. Then I go to Psalms 1:1 and I'm told I'm blessed if I keep the Torah. I am blessed if I walk in His way and clothe myself with His Word, with His Torah. It is interesting as you continue. Look at the promise

that is found as we continue in Psalms 1:3—³ **He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.** So if I ask Jeremiah who is blessed, he tells me the one who believes. Then I go to Psalms and ask who is blessed, the answer is the one who keeps Torah, the structure of the faith.

Going to John 3:36 we find a word from Yeshua—³⁶ **He who believes in the Son has everlasting life.** This is very simple. How do I obtain eternal life? I believe in Yeshua. Now let me take you to Matthew 19:16-17 where again we have Yeshua speaking—¹⁶ **Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”** ¹⁷ **So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”** That's crazy?

So here we have Yeshua in John 3:36 saying that—³⁶ **He who believes in the Son has everlasting life.** He says that if you want to enter into life you have to believe in Me. Then we go to Matthew 19:16-17, and He tells me you have got to **keep the commandments.** This is where the “structure of the faith” comes together. Right here.

Now check out John 8:24—²⁴ **Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; and this is in the negative contents, for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.** OK? This is crystal clear. We're going to die in our sins if we don't believe in Him. Let me take you to Ezekiel 18:24—²⁴ **“But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.**

So if I commit unrighteousness by walking away from the commandments of God, and it is Ezekiel talking in that passage, but it's the Lord speaking this passage, then as a consequence you are dead. Yet we go to John 8 and find that if I don't believe in Yeshua, I'm dead. This is the “structure of the faith” coming together. It's all together.

Go to Acts 2:38—³⁸ **Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ [Yeshua HaMashiach] for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** In order to receive that gift of the Holy Spirit, to receive eternal life, I need to repent. I need to turn from sin. How do I define sin? The Torah. I turn from sin and what must I do? I must call upon the name of Yeshua; I must be baptized in the structure of the faith. It's everywhere in Scripture.

John 7:38-39—³⁸ **He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.** ³⁹ **But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.** Do you get what He just said? You're going to get the Holy Spirit if you believe in Him. It's real simple. You believe in Him, and you get this gift of the Holy Spirit.

I want to take you to Acts 5:32—³² **And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.** They're not contradicting one another. It is simply the structure of the faith.

Let me go to Revelation 7:13-14. I saved this for the end because this is in the same book; this is pretty incredible. Revelation 7:13-14—³ **Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?”**¹⁴ **And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

So here you have these men at the end, and they are wearing white robes. And we are told the reason they're wearing white robes is because of the blood of Yeshua. Let me take you just a few chapters ahead in the same book. This is the same author, and this is what we read in Revelation 19:8—⁸ **And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**

OK, so you can go to Revelation 7 and find that they're wearing these white robes because they're washed **in the blood of the Lamb**. Then if you go to Revelation 19, we are told that they're wearing these white robes because it's **the righteous acts of the saints**. This is the “structure of the faith” over and over again. Genesis to Revelation the pages are filled with the structure and how this works. Revelation 12:17—¹⁷ **And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.** This is the structure of the faith.

The dragon is enraged with those **who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ**. He's not really concerned about somebody who has this deep philosophical conceptual belief. He's not intimidated. He's not intimidated by all those who go out and simply seek to keep the Torah and all the commandments; yet, they will not call upon the Lamb. They will not call upon Yeshua. He's not intimidated at all by that. This is scary! Go to Revelation 14:12—¹² **Here is the patience of the saints**, meaning perseverance. What is the perseverance of the saints? It describes it here; **here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus**. Again, it describes it—**here are those who keep the commandments of God and faith in Yeshua**. Do you want to know what you should do? You endure to the end and never renounce His great name; you never stop following his Word. That's what it means.

So in closing, when we look at Titus 1:1—¹ **Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ [Yeshua HaMashiach] according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness**. There's a whole lot here that Paul's bringing out—a special identity. It is powerful! He's exulting Yeshua and the Father as being echad [one], and he is delivering the structure of the faith. Who knew there would be so much in one little verse?

1. Tacitus, the Annals, Bk 15 Ch 44 (Alfred John Church, William Jackson Brodribb, Ed.)