**2 Corinthians 3**

Of the hard sayings of Paul, 2 Corinthians 3 can be the most confusing because of the nature of his writings. Keep in mind that Paul is a scholar who is most often writing to either other scholars or learned Jews, as well as learned Gentiles who had been attending the Synagogues. There are only a few cases in which he was writing to assemblies that he had not yet met, such as Romans, which was founded by learned Jews that had been at Shavuot (Pentecost) on the day the Spirit overshadowed the disciples, and Colossians.

So, let’s go through 2 Corinthians 3 and see how it relates to other things we have said in this work.

First off, in the previous chapter (2), Paul is consoling them concerning his first letter wherein he had rebuked them for allowing a brother among them to be with his father’s wife. He wrote to them (1 Corinthians 5) saying that they needed to remove the man so that the entire assembly would not become infected by such behavior, i.e., “a little leaven leavens the entire lump”.

**1Co 5:4**  In the Name of our Master יהושע Messiah, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Master יהושע Messiah,

**1Co 5:5**  **deliver such a one to Satan for destruction of the flesh, in order that his spirit be saved in the day of the Master יהושע**.

**1Co 5:6**  Your boasting is not good. **Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the entire lump?**

**1Co 5:7**  Therefore **cleanse out the old leaven**, so that you are a new lump, as you are unleavened. For also Messiah our Pěsaḥ was slaughtered for us.

The “old leaven” Paul is referring to is lawlessness, i.e., sin, which we were delivered from (Romans 3:23-25) and were warned no longer to live in (John 5:14; 8:11; Romans 6:1-2, 14-16; Hebrews 10:26-31; 1 John 2:1).

By allowing scripture to define itself, we know that sin, by definition, is the “transgression of the Torah/Law” (1 John 3:4) and Messiah saved us FROM our old sin and it’s penalty, i.e., death (Romans 3:23-25; Ephesians 2:1-7) When the “New Testament” writers, including Messiah Himself, instruct us NOT TO SIN, they must obviously expect us to obey the Torah/Law, and it is from this obvious truth that all Messianic doctrine must be understood.

In chapter 2, Paul tells the assembly that the reason he wrote such a harsh letter the last time, was so when he came to them there wouldn’t be any sadness between them. He then encourages them not to be too harsh on the young man, saying his punishment (exile) was sufficient and that they should forgive him so that he would not be swallowed up by sadness.

It is imperative that we understand what discipline within the Body looks like. First, if a brother or sister sins against us, we are to go to them privately, or to her husband if she is married or her father if she is not married, and IF the sinner CONFESSES their sin and FORSAKES it (Proverbs 28:13b), we have gained a brother/sister.

However, if they refuse, we are to take two or three others and confront them. If they still refuse, we are to bring them before the congregation for judgment (Matthew 18:15-17).

The judgment for willful (intentional) sin is expulsion (Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-31 and others), but the purpose of discipline should ALWAYS be motivated by love, with the goal being restoration. It should always be in our hearts to make judgments and execute discipline in a way that is consistent with what the totality of Scripture teaches. Never deviate!

Furthermore, it should always be in our heart to receive that brother or sister back again, when they have confessed and forsaken their previous disobedience. If ever our own hearts hold a grudge and are not willing to extend forgiveness, then we ourselves are in sin and have no right to judge another.

Lastly, Paul talks about his ministering in Troas and that some had accused him of “adulterating the Word of Elohim for gain”, which he rejects, and it is from this context we begin Chapter 3.

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**2Co 3:1**  Are we to begin to recommend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of recommendation to you, or from you?

**2Co 3:2**  You are our letter, having been written in our hearts, known and read by all men,

**2Co 3:3**  making it obvious that you are a letter of Messiah, served by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living Elohim, not on tablets of stone but on fleshly tablets of the heart.

**2Co 3:4**  And such trust we have toward Elohim, through the Messiah.

Paul begins this portion by telling the Corinthians that they themselves are the evidence that his message is sincere and correct. This is proved out by their witness among those surrounding them. Others have seen the effect of the Belief in the lives of these brothers.

Their belief in Messiah has changed them, specifically their heart condition. They are the letter/witness of Messiah and because their lives have changed, from lawlessness to faithfulness, Paul’s trust in YHWH is strengthened in Messiah.

**2Co 3:5**  Not that we are competent in ourselves to reckon any matter as from ourselves, but our competence is from Elohim,

**2Co 3:6**  who also made us competent as servants of a renewed covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter kills but the Spirit gives life.

Here’s where the confusion begins! Ever since the Word was first given, people have interpreted these verses according to their own thoughts and feelings and having done so, "they changed the truth of Elohim into a falsehood” (lie – Romans 1:25a).

Paul says in verse 5 that we, meaning the teachers, are not “competent in ourselves to reckon any matter as from ourselves”, which merits closer examination, if we are to gain correct understanding.

**Competent**: stgs #**G2425** “ἱκανός – hikanos”, from ἵκω hikō (ἱκάνω or ἱκνέομαι; akin to G2240; **to arrive**); competent (as if coming in season), that is, ample (in amount) or fit (in character).

The word “reckon” here is “logizomai” (to take an inventory, i.e., estimate) and so Paul is saying that they don’t consider themselves to have figured out the truth of the Good News by their own ability, but that the ability to understand it came directly from Elohim. This is similar to what he says in the first chapter of Galatians.

**Gal 1:11**  And I make known to you, brothers, that the Good News announced by me **is not according to man**.

**Gal 1:12**  For I did not receive it from man, **nor was I taught it**, **but through a revelation of יהושע Messiah.**

He goes on in verse 5 to say that Elohim, through Messiah, “made us competent as servants of a renewed covenant”. First of all, he is referring to himself and other teachers when referring to “us” as “servants”. They share the Good News of Yahushua, who is the Mediator of the “New” covenant (Hebrews 9:15).

**Renewed (New**): stgs #**G2537** “καινός – kainos”, of uncertain affinity; new (especially in **freshness**; while G3501 (youthful or fresh) is properly so with respect to age): - new.

Some debate whether this word means ‘new’ as in brand new, not having existed before, or ‘new’ in the since of being made new or renewed. This phrase, “new covenant” comes from the Hebrew of Jeremiah 31:31-33.

**Jer 31:31** “See, the days are coming,” declares יהוה, “when I shall make a **renewed covenant** with the **house of Yisra’ěl and with the house of Yehuḏah,**

**Jer 31:32**  **not like the covenant** I made with their fathers in the day when I strengthened their hand to bring them out of the land of Mitsrayim, My covenant **which they broke**, though I was a husband to them,” declares יהוה.

**Jer 31:33**  “For this is the covenant I shall make with **the house of Yisra’ěl** after those days, declares יהוה: I shall **put My Torah in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts.** And I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.

The most obvious thing here is that this “new covenant” promise is to the “House of Yisra’el” and the “House of Yehudah” (Jews). It does NOT say anything about this “new covenant” being for the Gentiles, though the Messianic Writings (NT) clearly say that Gentiles can take part in it. Gentiles join Yisra’el in covenant with YHWH through belief in Yahushua.

**\*\*\*THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A GENTILE CHURCH!!!\*\*\***

Gentiles are the “little dogs” that eat the children’s (Yisra’el) bread (Messiah) that falls from the Master’s (YHWH) table (Matthew 15:21-28). Believing Gentiles are adopted into YHWH’s family, having been grafted into His tree. That is to say, they are joined with Yisra’el to Himself. (Leviticus 19:33-34; Romans 11:11-24; Ephesians 2:11-19; Galatians 3:26-29).

**Renewed (New)**: stgs #**H2319** “חָדָשׁ - châdâsh”, from **H2318**; new: - fresh, new thing.

stgs #**H2318** “חָדַשׁ - châdash”, a primitive root; **to be new**; causatively **to rebuild**: - renew, repair.

It is the opinion of this author that this Hebrew word should be translated as “renewed” in this context for, at least, two reasons.

1. The Hebrew word “chadash” translated here (H2319) as ‘new’ and the word “chodesh” (H2320) which is translated ‘new moon’ or ‘month’, both come from “chadash” (H2318). Now we call the beginning of the month the ‘new moon’, but is the moon actually new or is it simply renewing its cycle?

The author believes this idea of renewal is what is meant in the context of the Good News of Messiah, where believers are “born again” in the same body unto a ‘new man’, and will be ‘made new’ or given a ‘new’ body at the resurrection, etc.

1. **Amo 3:7**  For the Master יהוה **does no matter** unless **He reveals**

**His secret to His servants the prophets.**

You can search the Scriptures until your life ebbs away and your corpse rots, but you will not find any evidence in the Tanak (OT) which teaches that this, or any other “new” covenant allows the children of Elohim to claim that His Law/Torah no longer applies to them.

Whether a person was born a Jew or a Gentile, whether they practice Judaism or Christianity, the scripture clearly teaches that BOTH the “**native born and the stranger that sojourns with them**” are to be considered native born Yisra’elis (Leviticus 19:33-34; also, Ephesians 2:8-19 and Romans 11:11-24). Furthermore, it teaches that there is **ONE** Law/Torah for both, **FOREVER, THROUGH-OUT YOUR GENERATIONS** (Numbers 15:15-16).

Nowhere in Scripture is it revealed to us that there ever was or ever will be a time when YHWH, or His “Messiah”, will turn a blind eye to those who disobey His Torah/Law as it was given to Yisra’el, through Moses. In fact, the complete opposite is taught in both the Tanak (OT) and the Messianic Writings (NT). Any teaching that or doctrine that teaches otherwise is heresy. **IS JUST NOT TRUE!!!**

Even the Messianic Writings (NT) say so clearly.

**Jas 2:24**  You see, then, that a man is declared right by works, and **not by belief alone**.

**Jas 2:25**  In the same way, was not Raḥaḇ the whore also declared right by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

**Jas 2:26**  For as the body without the spirit is dead, so also the **belief is dead without the works**.

Anyone trusting in a belief system, whether Jewish or Christian, or

Islam, etc., that teaches that the Torah/Law of YHWH no longer has any place in their life is trusting in a “Covenant of Death” (Isaiah 28).

In Jeremiah 31:32, YHWH says that this “new covenant” will not be like the one He made with their fathers when He brought them out of Egypt. Some would suggest that this is surely evidence that it is something ‘brand new’, since it is not like the ‘old’ covenant. Let’s allow the context to tell us what is “new” about this covenant instead of just assuming something that cannot be proven through an honest and exhaustive examination of the whole of Scripture from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22:21.

In verse 33, He says that He will “put (His) Torah in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts”, meaning it would **not** be written on stone and lambskin like it was the first time. Yes, that is different than the covenant He made with their fathers, yet it is still the SAME Torah/Law.

When He says that He is going to put it in their “inward parts”, He is referring to our inner-spirit-man who was born again when we believed in Messiah. This is consistent with something we have already talked about several times: He would “impute” righteousness to us.

Remember the difference in what the Greek word, “logizomai” (take inventory/place on account) means and what the Hebrew word, “chashab” (plait or weave) means. When we believe in the Lamb of Elohim (Messiah), the Spirit of YHWH makes righteousness a part of us, i.e., weaves it into this natural body.

This righteous part of us, i.e., the inner-spirit-man, will desire the Torah of Elohim and serve (guard and do)it.

**Rom 7:18**  For I know that in me, that is in **my flesh**, dwells no good. For to wish is present with me, but to work the good I do not find.

**Rom 7:19**  For the good that I wish to do, I do not do; but the evil I do not wish to do, this I practice.

**Rom 7:20**  And if I do that which I do not wish, it is no longer I who work it, but the sin dwelling in me.

**Rom 7:21**  I find therefore this law, that when I wish to do the good, that the evil is present with me.

**Rom 7:22**  **For I delight in the Torah of Elohim according to the inward man**,

**Rom 7:23**  but I see another torah in my members, battling against the torah of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the torah of sin which is in my members.

**Rom 7:24**  Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?

**Rom 7:25**  Thanks to Elohim, **through יהושע Messiah** our Master! So then, **with the mind I myself truly serve the Torah of Elohim**, but with the flesh the torah of sin.

Now, some have erroneously taught that as long as a person is serving “God” in their mind, he/she no longer has to obey the Torah/Law of YHWH. This doctrine is demonic and emphatically contradicted in the very next verse.

**Rom 8:1**  There is, then, now no condemnation to those who are in Messiah יהושע, **who do not walk according to the flesh**, but according to the Spirit.

There is no longer any condemnation for those who **DO NOT** live in obedience to their sinful flesh! It is “obeying sin” (Romans 6:15;) or “walking in the flesh” that leads to death (Romans 8:13; Galatians 2:15-18). What does it mean to live in the flesh?

**Rom 8:5**  For those who **live according to the flesh set their minds on the matters of the flesh**, but those who live according to the Spirit, the matters of the Spirit.

**Rom 8:6**  **For the mind of the flesh is death**, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace.

**Rom 8:7**  **Because the mind of the flesh is enmity** towards Elohim, for **it does not subject itself to the Torah of Elohim,** neither indeed is it able,

**Rom 8:8**  and those who are in the flesh are unable to please Elohim.

Living in obedience to the flesh is to live in disobedience to the Torah/Law of YHWH. Sadly, this is exactly what many, if not most teachers within the ‘Church’ are teaching believers today. A vast majority of ‘churches’ today are guilty of teaching believers to sin (1 John 3:4 – transgress the Law [KJV]).

“The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23) and its punishment is a “fierce fire which is about to consume the opponents”. In fact, there will be “much worse punishment” for those who know the truth and turn from it by sinning “willfully”. (Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-31).

Furthermore, when YHWH says that He will “write it on (our) hearts”, He is not saying that it will literally be inscribed on our hearts any more than He will literally “circumcise” our hearts (Romans 2:29). This phrase refers to placing the **desire to obey** in our hearts.

Every one of us who sincerely confessed the blood of Messiah rose from our knees desiring to please Him. Unfortunately, many so-called teachers within the ‘Church’ taught us to serve Him according to their own man-made dogma (Isaiah 29:13; quoted in Matthew 15:8-9 and Mark 7:6-7), before we really had a chance to be taught by YHWH from His own Word.

One of the reasons Messiah was so hard on the religious leaders of His day was because the Torah of YHWH had been with them for nearly fifteen centuries (1500 years), yet they had still developed their own man-made laws and teachings (traditions of the elders/fathers). This set them and all who heard them on a man-made path and not the ancient Path/Way of YHWH, the Elohim of their fathers.

These man-made traditions blinded both them and the people, keeping nearly all the Yahudim (Jews) in darkness even though the Light Himself walked among them. A darkness that still blinds them today.

**Note**: It is a bad thing to have some traditions, however, if those traditions add to, take away from or in any way contradict the Torah of YHWH, or we make the traditions a ‘requirement of participation’, we have crossed the line and are guilty of the same sin as the Scribes and Pharisees.

Today, that darkness (man-made laws and traditions) not only blinds the adherents of Judaism but has convinced nearly a billion of our ‘Christian’ brothers and sisters that their faith ALONE is enough to make them heirs of the Kingdom.

This teaching is opposed to the teachings all of the Messianic Writers. It is even in opposition to the teachings of Messiah, Himself, yet many so-called leaders within the ‘Church’ continue to repeat the errors of the first century Jewish leaders, just in a different way.

What both of these man-made religions misunderstand is that the Torah of YHWH was **NOT** given to ‘manage our behavior’, it was given to **TEST OUR HEARTS**.

**Deu 8:1**  “**Guard to do every command** which I command you today, that you might **live**, and shall **increase**, and **go in**, and shall **possess** the land of which יהוה swore to your fathers.

1. **Guard** (Observe in KJV): “shamar” (H8104) meaning ‘to hedge about’ or protect, refers to putting the word in our heart and not allowing anyone to take it from us i.e., corrupt it or misuse it.
2. **Do**: “asah” (H6213) meaning ‘to do or make’, refers to the application of it in our daily life, i.e., obeying it.

When the Father instructs His people (believers) to “guard” every command here in chapter 8, He is referring to what He had already told them in chapter 6.

**Deu 6:5**  “And you shall love יהוה your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might.

**Deu 6:6**  “And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be in your heart,

This refers to the spiritual part of belief and when He says, “to do” every command, He is referring to the physical part, obedience to His instructions (Torah), which leads to life (everlasting), to increase (prosperity/blessing), and to possession (inheritance) of the Promised Land (Kingdom).

**Deu 8:2**  “And you **shall** **remember** that יהוה your Elohim led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, **to humble you**, **prove you, to know what is in your heart, whether you guard His commands or not.**

The wilderness wandering is a shadow picture of our lives today that begins when we paint the blood of the Lamb of Elohim on the door posts and lintel of our **heart** and ends when Messiah returns to fulfill the shadow picture of Joshua and takes us across the final baptism (River Jordon – resurrection) into the Promised Land (Kingdom).

The Torah of YHWH, which He gave us through Moses at Mt. Sinai, is the PATH a believer walks in AFTER he has been justified (freed from death) by Messiah, the Lamb of YHWH, “every command” of which leads us to life, blessing and inheritance because it is the TEST of a sincere heart.

The Torah of YHWH is given to humble us and prove us, for it reveals the true condition of our hearts. It will judge whether we truly listened/loved/trusted/honored YHWH in sincerity or whether we listened/loved/trusted/honored another.

**Deu 8:3**  “And He humbled you, and let you suffer hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, to make you know **that man does not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of יהוה**.

When Messiah was challenged by Ha’Satan to turn stones into bread, He answered him by quoting the highlighted portion above. What makes this quote all the more interesting is that in John 6:33-51 Messiah refers to Himself as the “Bread of Life”.

We see then that man DOES NOT live by bread (Messiah – spiritual/belief) alone but by “every word” (Torah – physical/works) that proceeds from the Mouth of YHWH, i.e., the two parts (See: James 2:14-26).

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**2Co 3:7**  But if the administering of death in letters, engraved on stones, was esteemed, so that the children of Yisra’ěl were unable to look steadily at the face of Mosheh because of the esteem of his face, which was passing away,

**2Co 3:8**  how much more esteemed shall the administering of the Spirit not be?

Before we explain this passage, which, to be honest, is one of Paul’s most difficult to interpret, we will look at how and when the “letter” of the Torah is administering death.

**Deu 30:15**  “See, I have set before you today **life and good**, and **death and evil**,

**Deu 30:16**  in that I am commanding you today to **love** יהוה your Elohim, to **walk** in His ways, and to **guard** His **commands**, and His **laws**, and His **right-rulings**. And you shall **live and increase**, and יהוה your Elohim shall **bless** you in the land which you go to **possess**.

**Deu 30:17**  “**But if your heart turns away**, and you **do not obey**, and shall be **drawn away**, and **shall bow down to other mighty ones and serve them**,

**Deu 30:18**  “I have declared to you today that **you shall certainly perish**, you shall not prolong your days in the land which you are passing over the Yarděn to enter and possess.

As we have mentioned before, obedience to the Torah/Law of YHWH through belief in His Son, leads to life, prosperity, blessing and inheritance. In contrast, not obeying the Torah/Law of YHWH leads to death. Why? Because the “wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23a) and “sin is the transgression (violation) of the Torah/Law”, i.e., lawlessness (1 John 3:4).

So, the Torah of YHWH IS the administration of death **to those who disobey it**, however, it is also the administration of life **to those who obey it**. Unfortunately, “all have sinned and fallen short” (Romans 3:23), thus we are all under the administration of death. However, that does NOT mean there is a problem with the Torah, it means there is a problem within us, in our flesh (Romans 8:3a).

In the specific context of the Messianic Writings, Paul’s argument is that the Torah cannot be trusted to justify us or make us righteous in and of itself, because it has already condemned all men “under sin”, i.e., guilty.

Because of this fact, something greater than the Torah was needed to justify us from our sin and the death penalty which it carries, making us right before YHWH, and that something was blood, for there is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22).

YHWH, however, so loved His creation that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever will believe in the Son shall not perish but gain access to everlasting life (John 3:16).

**Rom 8:3**  For the Torah being powerless, in that it was weak through the flesh, Elohim, **having sent His own Son** in the **likeness of flesh** of sin, and **concerning sin**, **condemned sin in the flesh**,

**Rom 8:4**  so **that the righteousness of the Torah should be completed in us** **WHO DO NOT WALK ACCORDING TO THE FLESH** **but according to the Spirit**.

Remember, the argument Paul makes here in Romans MUST be consistent with what he is saying in 2 Corinthians 3, so let’s analyze what is being said here and then compare the two.

As mentioned earlier, the Torah has no power to justify or make us right before YHWH because the desires of our fleshly man are both very strong and in direct opposition to the righteousness of YHWH.

**Rom 8:6**  For **the mind of the flesh is death**, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace.

**Rom 8:7**  Because **the mind of the flesh is enmity towards Elohim, FOR IT DOES NOT SUBJECT ITSELF TO THE TORAH** of Elohim, **neither indeed is it able**,

**Rom 8:8**  and those who are **in the flesh are unable to please Elohim.**

The righteousness of YHWH, which He teaches us in His Torah, is contrary to our fleshly man and so, when we “walk” or live in a way that is NOT SUBJECT to His Torah, i.e., in disobedience to it, we prove ourselves to be “transgressors” (Galatians 2:17-18), living according to the desires of the fleshly man and rather than as servants of YHWH, regardless of who or what we say we believe in.

There is a condition connected to our belief in Yahushua that keeps us “under grace” once we have gained access to it through belief in Him, and that condition is obedience. This is exactly what Paul is teaching here in Romans 8.

In verse 4 he clearly says that “the righteousness of the Torah should be completed in us WHO DO NOT WALK ACCORDING TO THE FLESH but according to the Spirit. If the fleshly man does not “subject itself to the Torah of Elohim”, the law of contrast teaches that the spiritual man DOES “subject itself to the Torah of Elohim”.

This is consistent with what Paul teaches about the Torah, for it is he who says the Torah is “holy, just, and good” (Romans 7:12 – KJV) and that it is also “spiritual” (Romans 7:14a). Unfortunately, however, we ourselves are fleshly men, because when Messiah came “in the **likeness of flesh** of sin”, having become a man just like us, His primary purpose was “**concerning sin”**, meaning that He came to set us free from it, in the inner-man, and in doing so He “**condemned sin in the flesh”,** outer-man(Romans 8:3).

There is a constant battle going on within every believer that pits our inner-spiritual-man who has been “born again” against our outer-fleshly-man who is still “condemned in the flesh” (Galatians 5:17). But if we “walk in the spirit (man)” we shall “not accomplish the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16, also see Romans 8:13).

To be “walking according to the spirit”, means to walk in the Path/Way of the Torah through belief in Messiah, and “NOT according to the flesh”, which is believing in the Torah alone or not at all, which includes a few different groups.

There are those who neither believe in Messiah nor obey the Torah, i.e., atheist, Muslims, Buddhist, etc., and there are those who obey the Torah but do not believe in Yahushua Messiah, i.e., Judaism.

Unfortunately, there are also those who believe they are “walking in the Spirit” because they believe in Jesus, but they do not obey the Torah, which Paul himself calls spiritual (Romans 7:14), and thus they are actually walking in the flesh and not the spirit (Romans 8:7-8).

It is only those who believe in Yahushua Messiah for justification FROM sin and death AND walk in obedience to the Torah/Law of YHWH, with a sincere heart of compassion for his fellowman that shall escape both spiritual and physical death (the Second Death) at the resurrection of the just, i.e., the First Resurrection (Revelations 20).

Going back now to 2 Corinthians 3:6, we see Paul making the statement that we are servants of a “renewed covenant” wherein we DO NOT live in the “letter of the Torah” alone because it alone kills. Rather, we who have the mind of the spirit, subjects ourselves to the Torah of Elohim, through belief in Messiah. Once again, verses 7-8).

**2Co 3:7**  But if the **administering of death** in letters, engraved on stones, was esteemed, so that the children of Yisra’ěl were unable to look steadily at the face of Mosheh because of the esteem of his face, which was passing away,

**2Co 3:8**  how much **more esteemed shall** the administering of the Spirit not be?

As we have said, the Torah administers death only to those who disobey it and since we all have disobeyed it (sinned), it can no longer administer life to us. Paul says that the “letter” was esteemed, so much so that “Yisra’el were unable to look steadily at the face of Mosheh”. This is a reference to the ‘veil of Mosheh”, which we will talk more about in a bit.

He goes on to say that the “administering of the Spirit” has more esteem than the Torah and, of course, we agree. Unfortunately, many within the ‘Church’ remain in the dark as to what this actually means. defines it. Many teach that once you get “in the spirit”, by belief, meaning that your inner-spirit-man has been born again, that you are “sealed” for the day of a future redemption no matter what. This dogma is heresy.

The “administering of the Spirit” has more esteem because it is founded, NOT in the Torah itself, but in our belief in Messiah which is proven out by our submission to YHWH through obedience to His Torah.

It is belief in the blood of Messiah that gives us atonement from past sins and the penalty of death (Romans 3:25) and gives life to the inner-spirit-man. When this “new man” continues to struggle in his obedience, he will find no more condemnation, IF his intent is to “walk according to the spirit” (obedience), and NOT “according to the flesh” (disobedience).

Here we see the Two-Part Principle clearly taught. The inner man “delights” in the Torah of YHWH and “serves” it (Romans 7:22, 25), but it is belief in Yahushua Messiah that “saves me from this body of death” (Romans 7:24), when I “DO NOT walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:1).

Avoiding future condemnation is conditional and the condition has to do with HOW we administer the Torah in our lives. IF we walk “according to (our) spirit”, which is led by His Spirit, into obedience (Ezekiel 36:27), we will live in righteousness (Romans 6:15-16) and inherit everlasting life (Romans 6:22).

However, if we walk “according to the (our) flesh”, “serving sin” (Romans 6:16 and 8:7) we shall die.

**Rom 8:12**  So then, **brothers**, we are not debtors to the flesh, **to live according to the flesh.**

**Rom 8:13**  For **IF** you live according to the flesh, **you are going to die**; **BUT** if by the Spirit **you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.**

If the flesh “does not subject itself to the Torah of Elohim”, then, by contrast, the spirit DOES subject itself to the Torah of Elohim, and we can “put to death the deeds of the body (flesh)” by subjecting ourselves to the Torah of Elohim THROUGH belief in Messiah.

In the Messianic Writings, the Jewish Leaders were teaching the people to do the works of Torah as a means of salvation. Their trust/hope was placed in the Torah itself and not in YHWH, the Law Giver. Paul’s argument, as well as that of all the writers, in both “old” and “new”, teaches that the righteous man lives by belief (Hab 2:4, quoted in Galatians 3:11).

Thus, trusting/hoping in the Torah alone is an act of sin. The covenant at Sinai is founded on the condition that “IF you **diligently** **obey My voice** (Torah), AND shall **guard My covenant** (Blood), THEN **you shall be My treasured possession** above all the peoples” (Exodus 19:5-6). This is a clear reference from the Torah itself, of the Two-Part Principle at work.

**2Co 3:9**  For if the administering of condemnation had esteem, the administering of righteousness exceeds **much more** in esteem.

**2Co 3:10**  For indeed what was made esteemed **had no esteem in this respect, in view of the esteem that excels.**

**2Co 3:11**  For if that which is **passing away** was esteemed, much more that which remains in esteem.

**2Co 3:12**  Having then such expectation, we use much boldness of speech,

**2Co 3:13**  and not like Mosheh, **who put a veil over his face so that the children of Yisra’ěl should not look steadily at the end of what was passing away**.

**2Co 3:14**  But their **minds were hardened**, for to this day, when the old covenant is being read, **that same veil remains**, not lifted, because **in Messiah it is taken away**.

**2Co 3:15**  But to this day, when Mosheh is being read, **a veil lies on their heart**.

The Torah was and shall always be esteemed, unfortunately our disobedience to it caused it to condemn us, thus, we are unable to fulfill the righteous requirements of Torah. However, our belief in Messiah has more esteem because it accomplishes two things; 1) it delivers us from past sin and the condemnation of death, and 2) it can renew us daily in the mercy and grace of YHWH, thus allowing us to live in the righteousness of Torah.

There is, however, a condition imposed on #2 that IS NOT imposed on #1 and that condition is, IF we WALK according to the spirit and NOT according to the flesh. The word “walk” is about how we live and NOT about what we believe. Your walk proves what you believe.

Can we legitimately say we love our wife if we cheat on her and are always deceiving her? Absolutely Not!! And the same holds true in our relationship to the Father. We cannot say that we trust Him or fear Him or reverence Him or serve Him or love Him, if we don’t “guard to do” ALL He has commanded of us.

So, we first gain access to the favour of YHWH through belief (Messiah) but we remain in that favour by how we live (Torah). However, our trust/hope is ALWAYS in the atoning blood of Yahushua Messiah and NEVER in the works of Torah themselves.

**Jas 2:21**  Was not Aḇraham our father **declared right by works** when he offered Yitsḥaq his son on the slaughter-place?

**Jas 2:22**  Do you see that **the belief was working with his works**, and **by the works the belief was perfected**?

**Jas 2:23**  And the Scripture was filled which says, “Aḇraham believed Elohim, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness.” And He called him, “he who loves Elohim.”

**Jas 2:24**  You see, then, that **a man is declared right by works, and not by belief alone**.

When Paul says “passing away” in 2 Corinthians 3:11 as it refers to what is esteemed, we must ask ourselves, what is actually passing away and how is it related to Moses?

**Exo 34:29**  And it came to be, when Mosheh came down from Mount Sinai, while the two tablets of the Witness were in Mosheh’s hand when he came down from the mountain, that Mosheh did not know that the skin of his face shone since he had spoken with Him.

**Exo 34:30**  And Aharon and all the children of Yisra’ěl looked at Mosheh and saw the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

**Exo 34:31**  But Mosheh called out to them, and Aharon and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him, and Mosheh spoke to them.

**Exo 34:32**  And afterward all the children of Yisra’ěl came near, and he commanded them all that יהוה had spoken with him on Mount Sinai.

**Exo 34:33**  And when Mosheh **ended speaking** with them, he put a veil on his face.

**Exo 34:34**  But whenever Mosheh went in before יהוה to speak with Him, he would remove the veil until he came out. And when he came out he spoke to the children of Yisra’ěl what he had been commanded,

**Exo 34:35**  and the children of Yisra’ěl would see the face of Mosheh, that the skin of Mosheh’s face shone, and Mosheh would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.

Notice that when Moses was in the Presence of YHWH his face shone brightly and when he spoke the Word of YHWH his face shone brightly, it was only after the Word went forth and he stopped speaking that he covered his face so the people could not look at it continually.

The Torah is the “Knowledge of good and evil”, it is a light (Psalms 119:105; Proverbs 6:23). It’s not until we look into the light of Torah that we get knowledge of the Most High (Proverbs 2:1-9) and walking out (doing) the works of Torah is how we gain wisdom and understanding (Deuteronomy 4:5-6, Psalms 119:100).

The “light” that shone on Mosheh’s face was enlightenment or understanding and when he put on the veil the people no longer had the light of understanding shinning on them.

Later, after they got into the Land, Yisra’el substituted Torah light with the darkness of idolatry, and later still, after they returned from Babylonian captivity, they substituted Torah light with the blindness of man-made rabbinical dogma.

It was wisdom and understanding, which can only be gained through Torah obedience, that was “passing away” and NOT the Torah itself. The Torah is forever (Psalms 119:142), it cannot be added to or taken away from (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Ecclesiastes 3:14; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18-19). The Torah/Law is “holy, just and good” (Romans 7:12), and it is spiritual (Romans 7:14).

This passage in Exodus is similar to what James (Ya’aqob) says in his letter.

**Jas 1:23**  Because if anyone is a **hearer** of the Word and **not a**

**doer**, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror,

**Jas 1:24**  for he looks at himself, and goes away, and **immediately forgets what he was like.**

We see that James is referring to those who DO NOT OBEY the Word, they are like someone looking in a mirror but when they look away they forget what they were like. The Torah is the mirror in this metaphor, for when we are looking at the Word/Torah we see the light but when we look away, we forget the Way that we are to walk.

Why? Because of the flesh, which has “enmity towards Elohim, for it **DOES NOT SUBJECT** itself to the Torah of Elohim, neither indeed is it able” (Romans 8:7). When the disobedient read the Bible, the message of righteousness that it teaches does not remain in them once they close the book and walk away.

This is the same message YHWH is explaining to us in Exodus concerning the veil. When Moses was reading the Torah to the people, the righteousness of YHWH was being revealed to them, but once Moses finished speaking and put on the veil, the people could no longer see the light of righteousness and went their own way.

However,…

**Jas 1:25**  But he that **looked into the perfect Torah**, that of freedom, **and continues in it**, not becoming a hearer that forgets, but a doer of work, **this one shall be blessed in his doing of the Torah**.

The phrase “looked into the perfect Torah” is “παρακυψας εις νομον τελειον τον” in Greek and is “looked into instruction complete the”. It refers to the ‘completeness’ or fulness of the Torah, which includes the Good News of Yahushua Messiah.

The Torah is the foundation of the Belief, Messiah being the Chief Cornerstone of that foundation, meaning that it is from Him that all the Torah is measured.

The word “looked” is past tense and contextually refers to someone who has heard the Good News of Messiah, which is revealed in the Torah, i.e., a Believer.

**Note**: It is important to remember that there was no ‘New Testament” when these books were first penned. When these writers were putting these “NT” books together, the “word/law/scripture” they were referring to is the Tanak (OT).

Next, the phrase “of freedom” (ἐλευθερία – G1657) has two parts, one spiritual, what YHWH has done for us through Messiah, and one physical, which is what we do in response to what He has done.

The “looked into” portion of this verse refers to the spiritual part that sets us freedom FROM past sin, and the sentence of death (Romans 8:2). It is our belief in Messiah that sets us free from sin and death..

The “continues in it” portion of this verse pertains to the physical part, referring to the Way we LIVE, i.e., the “doer of the work” (Torah obedience), which sets us free from the fear of condemnation when we stumble (Romans 8:15).

So, the Torah is NOT “done away with” or has not “passed away”, in fact, our belief in Messiah removes the veil of blindness and misunderstanding, establishing the Torah (Romans 3:31) as the Way all believers are to ‘walk in’ (Numbers 8:1-3; Matthew 4:4), without additions or subtractions (Ecclesiastes 3:24; Revelation 22:18-19), as the Path of wisdom and understanding (Deuteronomy 4:5-6) that we are to live by to receive all the blessings in the Scripture, including inheritance.

**2Co 3:16**  And when one turns to the Master, **the veil is taken away**.

**Note**: The veil represents both walking in our own way as well as the “philosophy and empty deceit, according to the **tradition of men**, according to the **elementary matters** of the world (idolatry)” (Colossians 2:8), whether we call it ‘theology’ or ‘ideology’, whether we call it ‘faith’ or ‘atheism’, whether the ‘truth’ or a ‘lie’. It is any dogma (teaching, opinion, rule) of men that adds to or takes away from the Word of YHWH and the simplicity of the Good News, i.e., obedience to the Word/Torah of YHWH through belief in Yahushua Messiah.

**2Co 3:17**  Now יהוה is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of יהוה is, there is freedom.

**2Co 3:18**  And we all, **as with unveiled face** we see as in a mirror the esteem of יהוה, are **being transformed into the** **same likeness** from esteem to esteem, as from יהוה, the Spirit.

As we are told in verse 16, belief in Messiah has removed the veil of our blindness (disobedience), giving us “freedom” from “the torah of sin and death”.

**Rom 8:2**  For the torah of the Spirit of the life in Messiah יהושע has set me free from the torah of sin and of death.

Believers have been “born again” in the inner-spirit-man, having died with Messiah.

**Rom 6:3**  Or do you not know that as many of us as were **immersed into Messiah יהושע were immersed into His death**?

**Rom 6:4**  We were therefore **buried with Him** through immersion into death, that as Messiah was raised from the dead by the esteem of the Father, so also **we should walk in newness of life**.

The “freedom” we have in the Spirit of YHWH, is NOT freedom from the **requirement** to obey the Torah/Law, it is freedom FROM the condemnation of death the Torah/Law requires from all who disobey it (sin - 1 John 3:4 and Romans 6:23) and the freedom from fear (Romans 8:15) of condemnation when our flesh brings us “into captivity to the torah of sin which is in my members” (Romans 7:23).

We were “dead in trespasses and sins” but now we have been “made alive” again in Yahushua Ha-Mashiach (the Messiah).

**Eph 2:1**  And you **were** **dead in trespasses and sins,**

**Eph 2:2**  in which you once **walked** according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the **sons of disobedience,**

**Eph 2:3**  among whom **also we all once lived** in the **lusts of our flesh**, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature **children of wrath**, as also the rest.

**Eph 2:4**  **BUT** Elohim, who is rich in compassion, because of His great love with which He loved us, *(emphasis mine)*

**Eph 2:5**  even when we **were** dead in trespasses, **made us alive together with Messiah** - by favour you have been saved -

**Eph 2:6**  and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Messiah יהושע,

**Eph 2:7**  in order to show in the coming ages the exceeding riches of His favour in kindness toward us in Messiah יהושע.

We were not physically dead before we believed, so this is talking about spiritual death and our belief in Messiah has made us alive again in the spirit man. It is in this state of ‘new birth’ that we are to “delight in the Torah of Elohim” (Romans 7:22) and serve it (obey – Romans 7:25).

As Paul says here in Ephesians, we **were** “dead” because of “trespasses and sins” (1 John 3:4), living out our lives according to the “lust of the flesh”, that “does not subject itself to the Torah of Elohim” (Romans 8:7), following the “spirit that is now working in the SONS OF DISOBEDIENCE” and “were by nature the CHILDREN OF WRATH”.

“BUT Elohim” has “made us alive together with Messiah” to “walk in the newness of life” (Romans 6:4) and “to serve sin (disobedience) no longer” (Romans 6:6, 11a), but to present our “members as instruments of righteousness to Elohim (Romans 6:13c), in which we serve “obedience” leading to “righteousness” (Romans 6:16d).

This newness of a life, lived in obedience to the Torah of YHWH through belief in His Son, Yahushua Messiah, bears in us “fruit resulting in set-apartness” (holiness, sanctification), the final outcome being “everlasting life” (Romans 6:22).

Our belief in Messiah begins a process of salvation that first, makes us alive again in the inner man, covering us in the ‘spiritual’ righteousness of Messiah. Then, while boasting/trusting in Messiah, we live out ‘physical’ righteousness through obedience to the Torah of YHWH, which sets us apart to Him in this life and leads to the new birth of the outer-physical-man at the resurrection of the Just unto the Kingdom of Messiah and everlasting life.

These Two-Parts, spiritual and physical, represent what He has done for us in Messiah and what we do in response to that, because we Love Him. And, as Jeremiah told us concerning the “new covenant”;

**Jer 31:33**  “For this is the covenant I shall make with the house of Yisra’ěl after those days, declares יהוה: I shall **put My** **Torah in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts**. And I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.

See, the “New Covenant” does not ‘do away with’ the Torah of YHWH, it puts it in our ‘inner man’ that will “delight” in it and serve it (Romans 7:22, 25). And YHWH will “write it on (our) hearts”, so that we desire to obey it.

**Php 2:12**  So that, my beloved, as you always **obeyed** – not only in my presence, but now much rather in my absence – **work** out your own deliverance with **fear and trembling**,

**Php 2:13**  for it is Elohim who is working in you **both to desire and to work for His good pleasure**.

Then, after He has given us a “new spirit” and a “new heart”, He puts His Spirit within us.

**Eze 36:26**  “And I shall give you a **new heart and put a new spirit within you**. And I shall take the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I shall give you a heart of flesh,

**Eze 36:27**  and put **My Spirit within you**. And I shall **cause you to walk in My laws and guard My right-rulings and shall do them.**

This is the “New Covenant” promise, a new inner-spirit-man and a new heart of obedience. Scripturally, a “heart of stone” is one that is stubborn and rebellious, disobedient and the opposite of a “heart of flesh”, which is humble and contrite.

The phrase “fleshly heart” is NOT the same thing as a “heart of flesh”, because the former is one that desires the lusts of the flesh and does not subject itself to the Torah of YHWH (Romans 8:7), while the latter is a heart to do the will of YHWH, i.e., to “walk in My laws and guard My right-rulings and shall do them”.

The Messianic Writings (NT) tell us that the Spirit of YHWH that dwells within the heart of the Believer, is the Spirit of Truth that comes from the Father (John 14:17) and the Messiah asks the Father to give us this Helper because we love Him.

**Joh 14:15**  “**IF** you love Me, **you shall guard My commands**.

**Joh 14:16**  “**And I shall ask the Father**, and He shall give you another Helper, to stay with you forever –

You see, we prove our love by obeying and when we do, Messiah works on our behalf.

**Joh 14:21**  “He who **possesses My commands and guards them**, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I shall love him and manifest Myself to him.”

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**Joh 14:23** יהושע answered him, “If anyone loves Me, **he shall guard My Word**. And My Father shall love him, and We shall come to him and make Our stay with him.

**Joh 14:24**  “He who does not love Me **does not guard My Words**. **And the Word which you hear is NOT MINE but of the Father Who sent Me.**

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**Joh 15:7**  “**IF** you stay in Me, and **My Words stay in you**, you shall ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.

In conclusion, 2 Corinthians 3 DOES NOT support the heresy of a Law/Torah-less grace, as a majority of the ‘Church’ teaches today. It does, in fact, support a Law/Torah obedient ‘grace’, wherein we have access to the wisdom and understanding of the Torah, which the adherents of Judaism and Christianity lack, because we are obedient to what the Torah requires (Deuteronomy 4:5-6).

Just like every other scripture passage they use to attempt to prove that believers in “Jesus” no longer have to obey the ‘Mosaic Law’, this passage actually confirms our responsibility to “guard and do” it, for doing so is our righteousness” before a righteous Elohim (Deuteronomy 6:24-25).

**Deu 6:24**  And יהוה commanded us to do **All** these laws, **to fear יהוה our Elohim**, **for our good always**, **to keep us alive**, as it is today.

**Deu 6:25**  And it is **righteousness for us when we guard to do all this command before יהוה** our Elohim, as He has commanded us.’ (See also: Psalms 119:142, 172 and Isaiah 51:7)