The modern versions of the Scripture, like the King James Version quoted below, have several translational flaws in them and some of these flaws have perverted the meaning of what was written and have influenced the way theologians have understood doctrine.

Ecclesiastes 3:14-15 is one such passage and though the difference in how the verse was translated and the actually meaning of the verse may seem benign at first glance, it is just one small cog in a much larger wheel of error that has and still is leading the Christian Church astray.

First, let’s begin examining Ecclesiastes 3 at verse 1 (from the KJV) so that we can set the context.

**Ecc 3:1**  To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

**Ecc 3:2**  A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

**Ecc 3:3**  A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

**Ecc 3:4**  A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

**Ecc 3:5**  A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

**Ecc 3:6**  A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

**Ecc 3:7**  A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

**Ecc 3:8**  A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. (KJV)

In verses 1-8, we see the author establishes that there is a time for everything under the sun, which is a general expression of the way the world works and the things that we must live with and through in this life.

**Ecc 3:9**  What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

**Ecc 3:10**  I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. (KJV)

He asks, what does man have to gain from all his labor? Then, he answers himself by saying, he has seen (come to understand) the “travail” (task) that YHWH has given man, that man should be “exercised in it”.

Exercised: stg’s #H6031 “‛ânâh”, A primitive root (possibly rather identical with H6030 through the idea of looking down or browbeating); **to depress** literally or figuratively, transitively or intransitively (in various applications). (sing is by mistake for H6030.): - **abase self**, afflict (-ion, self), answer [by mistake for H6030], **chasten self**, deal hardly with, defile, exercise, force, gentleness, **humble** (self), hurt, ravish, sing [by mistake for H6030], speak [by mistake for H6030], **submit self**, weaken, X in any wise.

YHWH has given man tasks so that he might submit himself to them and be humbled by them.

**Ecc 3:11**  He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

**Ecc 3:12**  I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

**Ecc 3:13**  And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God. (KJV)

Here he states that YHWH has placed in the heart of man a desire to learn and understand the complexity of all He has made, so that man can learn that he is incapable of learning the vastness of all the YHWH has done and neither can he grasp the enormity of who He is.

The language in verse 12 begs the question, is there no good in the tasks YHWH has set before man, or is there no good in the works that YHWH Himself has done, or maybe, is there no good in the hearts of man wherein YHWH has put this desire?

A person would be hard-pressed to prove either of the first two statements from the Scripture, however, proving Scripturally that there is no good in the hearts of man, is a simple task.

**Gen 6:5**  And יהוה saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (The Scriptures)

**Jer 17:9**  “The heart is crooked above all, and desperately sick – who shall know it? (The Scriptures – see also: Jer 7:24; 16:12; 18:12; 23:17)

What has happened in reality, is that man has attempted to understand and explain the vastness of YHWH’s creation to prove that He doesn’t exist and so the wickedness of the heart of man has corrupted the natural order of things.

Though this is true, it is possible that verse 12 is simply saying, “I know that **there is no good for them** but to rejoice, and to do good in their lives (The Scriptures).

Whatever the case, the key part of this verse is in the admonishment to “do good in their lives.”

Knowing what the “good” we are supposed to do in this life is, is easy enough, for the Torah says that obeying it is good.

**Deu 30:14**  “For the Word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart – **to do it**.

**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.

**Deu 30:19**  “I have called the heavens and the earth as witnesses today against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, you shall **choose life, so that you live, both you and your seed**,

**Deu 30:20**  to **love יהוה** your Elohim, to **obey His voice**, and to **cling to Him** – for He is your life and the length of your days – to dwell in the land which יהוה swore to your fathers, to Aḇraham, to Yitsḥaq, and to Ya‛aqoḇ, to give them.”  (The Scriptures)

Not only is obedience to the Torah defined as “good” but obeying it is “for our good always” because it will “keep us alive”.

**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. (The Scriptures)

Keeping us alive, is not just a physical promise but leads to eternal life in the Kingdom of YHWH, which the “Promised Land” is a shadow picture.

We see here also, that keeping all the commands of the Torah is how we “fear” YHWH, which is important to know as we return to our passage in Ecclesiastes.

**Ecc 3:14**  I know that, **whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever**: **nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it**: and God doeth it, **that men should fear before him.**(KJV)

“…whatsoever God doeth” includes all that He has said, and it “shall be forever”, **nothing** can be added to what He has said and done, and **nothing** can be taken away from it!

The principle of no adding and no taking from the Word of YHWH is a consistent one

throughout the totality of Scripture (see also: Deut 4:2; 12:32; Pro 30:6 and Rev 22: 18-19).

As stated above, obeying ALL the commands of the Torah is how we prove that we fear YHWH, as well as prove that we love Him, and cling to Him, and walk in His ways, etc., and by doing so we remain in life, which leads to eternal life.

Yes, there is no life outside of belief in Yahushua Messiah, belief must come first and then obedience, however, if a person learned a little Hebrew and examined verse 15 they would find Messiah there, as well as, a couple principles that would help them understand the Good News!

**Ecc 3:15**  That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.  (KJV)

There is a lot to be said about this verse and we will get to that, but first we need to understand that there is no chapter or verse headings in the Hebrew Scriptures. All these headings were added by men to help in locating and identifying passages and topics.

So, verse 15 is part of verse 14 as the teaching flows through this chapter. That seems obvious but when men began creating doctrine they have not always obeyed this principle.

Now, the first portion of this verse is simply stating that YHWH doesn’t change and the things He does are “forever”, because “nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it”.

What He put into place before He created all things, is still in place today and will be in place forever, nothing any other creature, especially man, does or says can change that.

When YHWH declared that His Torah was the standard of righteous living for men, that declaration was forever, and no amount of human intellectualizing and religious re- interpretation of the Scripture can change that.

Now, for that to be true than, what the Christian Church calls the “New Testament” doctrine of grace must be found throughout the Tanak (OT), and it is from the Tanak that all the Messianic writers proved their grace doctrine.

Somehow, though, this truth has been lost amidst all the grace dogma perpetuated by the church today.

Some of their misunderstanding, however, comes from translational issues that are not generally taught in the church, even among those who call themselves teachers.

There are a couple things here in Ecc 3:15 that, if understood properly, would help people see the plan of YHWH more clearly.

First off, the translation of the second part of this verse is not correct.

“and God requireth that which is past” … is not what this passage says, however, the way it is translated has put a stumbling block in the way of Christian understanding.

Christianity teaches that, because of the grace extended to the believer, the Law (Torah) that YHWH instituted for Yisra’el does not apply to them in how they live out their lives and neither will it influence how the will be judged.

This could not be farther from the truth and they have misunderstood many other passages to come to this erroneous conclusion, but the way verse 15 has been translated has become just a single piece of the problem.

Also, take into consideration that this grace dogma was developed before any of the modern bible versions were translated, including the KJV, so it is likely that the translation of this verse is the result of a presumption on the part of the translators.

What we mean is, the translators were men who were already established in the dogma of the Christian Church, specifically the Protestant Church, and so they translated this and other verses from that perspective.

There are plenty of examples of this through the Scripture, but we will not be focusing on those in the teaching. For now, let’s look at this portion of verse 15 in its original Hebrew.

והאלהים יבקשׁ את־נרדף׃

U-H-‘LOHIM Y-BQSH ‘T־NRDK

The Hebrew letters represented here with the U and the H are the “ו” (waw/vav) and the “ה” (hey), which when used at the beginning of a word represent the conjunction (and/but) and the definitive article (the).

The first word in this portion of verse 15 is “Elohim”, which is translated “God” but actually means “Mighty One” and refers to the One in authority, in this case YHWH.

So far, we have “and/but the elohim”. Even though the definitive article “ה” (hey) is in the Hebrew it is not translated into English, because English has capitalization, so the translators simply capitalize the word “Elohim” to emphasize the definitive.

The second word in this portion begins with a “י” (yod), which when placed at the beginning of another word usually represents the pronoun “he”.

The word the yod is attached to is “baqash”, which translates as “to search out” and in the context of verse 15, should be translated as “searches out” or “seeks”.

This third word is “את” (et) in Hebrew and is generally thought by translators to only be significant because it points to the object and so, is not translated into English.

**Et**: stg’s #**H853** “eth”, Apparently contracted from H226 (a signal) in the demonstrative sense of entity; properly self (but generally used to point out more definitely the object of a verb or preposition, even or namely): - (As such unrepresented in English.)

Here the translators are only partial right, the “et” is a signal that points to something, and that something is the object “elohim”, but not just the way they perceive it.

The “את” in Hebrew is called the Memra by the ancient rabbis.

Note: Memra is the Aramaic for "word", which, in the Greek, is Logos. The concept of the memra is derived from Psalm 33:6: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.". The root Hebrew for 'word' here is dabar. In the text, the inflected word is bidabar-"by the word".

(Memra | Page 2 | Christian Forums. [www.christianforums.com/threads/memra.7628587/page-2](http://www.christianforums.com/threads/memra.7628587/page-2))

From <https://www.bing.com/search?q=the+memra&qs=n&form=CHRDEF&pc=U316&sp=-1&pq=the+memra&sc=8-9&sk=&cvid=11257E45EF9D444487289DBA826C0D53>

And,

MEMRA (= "Ma'amar" or "Dibbur," "Logos"): By: Kaufmann Kohler

"The Word," in the sense of the creative or directive word or speech of God manifesting His power in the world of matter or mind; a term used especially in the Targum as a substitute for "the Lord" when an anthropomorphic expression is to be avoided.

—Biblical Data:

In Scripture "the word of the Lord" commonly denotes the speech addressed to patriarch or prophet (Gen. xv. 1; Num. xii. 6, xxiii. 5; I Sam. iii. 21; Amos v. 1-8); but frequently it denotes also the creative word: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made" (Ps. xxxiii. 6; comp. "For He spake, and it was done"; "He sendeth his word, and melteth them [the ice]"; "Fire and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling his word"; Ps. xxxiii. 9, cxlvii. 18, cxlviii. 8). In this sense it is said, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. cxix. 89). "The Word," heard and announced by the prophet, often became, in the conception of the seer, an efficacious power apart from God, as was the angel or messenger of God: "The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel" (Isa. ix. 7 [A. V. 8], lv. 11); "He sent his word, and healed them" (Ps. cvii. 20); and comp. "his word runneth very swiftly" (Ps. cxlvii. 15).

(From <http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/10618-memra>)

Memra is an Aramaic word that translates as “word” or “witness”. The “את” represents the “Word” or “Witness” of YHWH, who is Yahushua Ha-Mashiach (the Messiah).

The “את” points to the fact that the “Word of Elohim” is at work accomplishing what is happening in the passage. The “Word of Elohim” became flesh (John 1:14) to accomplish the redemption of the people.

It is used many times in Scripture but never translated into English and each time it is pointing to a work that Messiah would accomplish on behalf of the Father, YHWH.

The “את” is present in the very first verse of Scripture, in fact it is there twice.

**Gen 1:1**  In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth. (The Scriptures)

(H) בראשׁית ברא אלהים **את** השׁמים ו**את** הארץ׃ B’r 1:1

“In the beginning created elohim **et** the heavens and-**et** the earth.”

It was the “et elohim” (Word of Elohim) that created.

**Joh 1:1**  In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and **the Word was Elohim**.

**Joh 1:2**  He was in the beginning with Elohim.

**Joh 1:3**  **All came to be through Him**, and **without Him not even one came to be that came to be**.

**Joh 1:14**  And **the Word became flesh** and pitched His tent among us, and we saw His esteem, esteem as of an only brought-forth of a father, complete in favour and truth.

Yochanan (John) understood this principle of the “את” and he attempted to reveal it to us, but our teachers did not and still do not understand.

Before we explain the significance of the “את” here, let’s finish translating verse 15.

The final word in this verse is “radaph”, which means to “run after” (to follow or pursue).

So, verse 15 says, “…and/but the elohim searches out et ran after.”

**Ecc 3:15**  Whatever is has already been, and what shall be has been before. **But Elohim seeks out what has been pursued**. (The Scriptures)

Two questions remain: 1. “How do we know whether the conjunction “ו” (waw/vav) means and or but? and,

2. What is the significance of the “את”?

Context, context context!!!

We must see that verse 14 is setting a precedent, that the things that YHWH lays down are

forever and they cannot be added to nor taken away from. Also, that this principle is confirmed by the first part of verse 15.

Now that this precedent is confirmed, how does YHWH make judgments based on the precedent?

Well, if you translate the last portion of verse 15 the way the Christians have, “and God requires what is past”, then you have no choice but to conclude that He will condemn everyone because His Torah says that the person who sins shall die.

Furthermore, the Scripture is clear:

**Rom 3:10**  As it has been written, “There is none righteous, no, not one!

**Rom 3:11**  “There is no one who is understanding, there is none who is seeking Elohim.

**Rom 3:12**  “They all have turned aside, they have together become worthless. There is none who does good, no, not one.”

(Psa 14:1-3; Psa 53:1-4)

**Rom 3:13**  “Their throat is an open tomb, with their tongues they have deceived,” “The poison of adders is under their lips,”

(Psa 5:9; Psa 140:3)

**Rom 3:14**  “Whose mouth is filled with cursing and bitterness.”

(Psa 10:7)

**Rom 3:15**  “Their feet are swift to shed blood,

(Pro 1:16)

**Rom 3:16**  ruin and wretchedness are in their ways,

**Rom 3:17**  and the way of peace they have not known.”

**(**Isa 59:7)

**Rom 3:18**  “There is no fear of Elohim before their eyes.”

**(**Psa 36:1)

Because of the strict righteousness and justice of YHWH, He cannot arbitrarily forgive sin. The penalty for sin MUST be paid BEFORE YHWH can extend His mercy to the sinner. He has no choice in the matter, it is simply the nature of who He is.

So, verse 14 establishes the eternal nature of the righteousness and justice of YHWH and the judgment required for unrighteousness. He doesn’t want anyone to perish (2 Pet 3:9) but

some will because of the consequences of their own choices.

The first part of verse 15 confirms the eternal nature of YHWH and His righteous judgment, in that everything He has done and said is as relevant now as it was when He established it in the beginning and it will be relevant forever.

All this being true, how than is YHWH able to extend mercy and forgiveness to the sinner?

**Rom 3:21**  But now, **apart from the Torah**, a righteousness of Elohim has been revealed, being witnessed by the Torah and the Prophets,

**Rom 3:22**  and the righteousness of Elohim **is through belief in יהושע Messiah** to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference,

**Rom 3:23**  **for all have sinned and fall short of the esteem of Elohim,**

**Rom 3:24**  **being declared right, without paying, by His favour through the redemption which is in Messiah יהושע,**

**Rom 3:25**  whom **Elohim set forth as an atonement, through belief in His blood**, to **demonstrate His righteousness, because in His tolerance** Elohim had passed over the **sins that had taken place before**,

**Rom 3:26**  to demonstrate at the present time **His righteousness, that He is righteous and declares righteous the one who has belief in יהושע.**

**Rom 3:27**  Where, then, is the boasting? It is shut out. By what torah? Of works? No, but by the torah of belief.

**Rom 3:28**  **For we reckon that a man is declared right by belief without works of Torah.**

**Rom 3:29**  Or is He the Elohim of the Yehuḏim only, and not also of the nations? Yes, of the nations also,

**Rom 3:30**  since it is one Elohim who shall declare right the circumcised **by** belief and the uncircumcised **through** belief.

**Rom 3:31**  Do we then nullify the Torah through the belief? Let it not be! On the contrary, **we establish the Torah.**

Now, we do a much more thorough explanation of this passage in our book “Not under the Law and the Error of the Wicked”, so we will just briefly highlight the important parts as they relate to our primary text in Ecclesiastes 3.

First, verses 21-23 are consistent with what we have said about verse 14 in Ecclesiastes 3, in that, the righteousness and justice of YHWH had been violated by man and the Torah could do nothing for man except judge him.

So, YHWH had to provide another way to extend mercy and forgiveness to man that did not violate His own righteousness or the justice of Torah.

His provision came in the form of His own Word in human flesh. This Word was the same Word that had condemned man for sin, but having become human, this Word could now offer Himself as a sacrifice to cover the sins of those who would believe in Him, thus bringing mercy instead of judgment, while still preserving the righteousness and justice of YHWH.

This last paragraph is what verses 24-26 are teaching us, however, we must look closely to what His sacrifice accomplished according to this passage. It says that in Messiah, YHWH has passed over the sins that had “taken place before”.

All past sin and the penalty associated to it was “passed over” by YHWH, just as the blood of the Passover Lamb of Exodus 12, allowed the first born of Yisra’el to escape the death angel.

But didn’t most of those who escaped Egypt die in the wilderness, never reaching the Promised Land?

The answer is, Yes and this is a shadow picture for us to learn from today. Though we have had all of our sin washed away and have been saved from the penalty of death though the blood of our Passover Lamb, Yahushua, it is still possible to die the “Second Death” and never reach the Kingdom of Messiah.

How, then, do we ensure that our initial confession of belief in Yahushua grants us access to the Kingdom?

Consider what Brother James (Ya’aqob) says in James 2:14-25.

**Jas 2:14**  My brothers, what use is it for anyone to say he has belief but does not have works? **This belief is unable to save him**.

**Jas 2:15**  And if a brother or sister is naked and in need of daily food,

**Jas 2:16**  but one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” but you do not give them the bodily needs, what use is it?

**Jas 2:17**  **So also belief, if it does not have works, is in itself dead**.

**Jas 2:18**  But someone might say, “You have belief, and I have works.” Show me your belief without your works, and **I shall show you my belief by my works.**

**Jas 2:19**  You believe that Elohim is one. You do well. **The demons also believe – and shudder!**

**Jas 2:20**  But do you wish to know, O foolish man, that the belief without the works is dead?

**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**.

**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.**

There must be an accompanying work to our belief or that belief is dead and will lead us back into death, which is the Second Death in the Lake of Fire. (See also: Galatians 2:17-18)

Well, Paul covers this in Romans 3, in the very passage we are reviewing, its just overlooked by modern teachers because of their anti-Torah bias.

In verse 28 of Romans 3, Paul clearly states:

**Rom 3:28** For we reckon that a man is declared right by belief **without works of Torah**.

Then he states in verse 31:

**Rom 3:31** Do we then **nullify the Torah** through the belief? **Let it not be!** On the contrary, **we establish the Torah**.

“Since we are declared right (justified) by belief and not by the works of the Torah, does that mean the Torah has no place in our lives anymore?”

Christian teachers will tell you that, “Yes, our belief means that we no longer need to obey the ‘Old Testament Law’ anymore”.

However, Paul says that is not true. To him, the Torah or “Old Testament Law” is how a believer lives righteously before YHWH.

His argument is NOT about living in obedience to the Torah AFTER we have been justified, but whether works of the Torah can justify us, and his answer is no. Why?

Why can’t the Torah justify us from death? After all, doesn’t Paul tell us in Romans 2:13 that obeying the Torah justifies us?

**Rom 2:13**  For not the hearers of the Torah are righteous in the sight of Elohim, **but the doers of the Torah shall be declared right.** (G1344 - dikaioō / Justified)

There is a ton of confusion today about this, but there need not be. Paul’s teaching in Romans

is a letter to the assembly in Rome explaining the “Good News” of Messiah and he is doing it in

a certain manner.

Romans 1 establishes that the whole of creation testifies to the existence of a Creator and that

man has no excuse for not believing. It states clearly that salvation comes through Yahushua Messiah and that hope is established in belief, from beginning to end.

Romans 2 criticizes the Jews brethren in Rome for condemning the Gentile brothers who have little or no knowledge of the Torah and how to live it. It is in this passage that Paul says the ones who DO the Torah are justified, however, he goes on to condemn the Jewish believers concerning their own disobedience (sin).

He tells them that a real Jew is not one of birth right, but is one of heart and then he comes to Chapter 3, where he first establishes that no one, Jew or Gentile, has ever lived righteously and then says, in verse 20, “**Therefore by works of Torah no flesh shall be declared right** before Him, for by the Torah is the knowledge of sin”.

He declares that everyone is guilty of sin, “Therefore” the works of Torah cannot make them right from sin and death.

The Torah can only justify those who live in obedience to it, like Messiah, it cannot justify us once we have disobeyed it, because it is the authority that condemned us to death in the first place.

**1Co 15:56**  And the sting of death is the sin, and **the power of the sin is the Torah**.

We can harken back to our primary text again and see that Ecclesiastes 3:14 is referring to this same principle, YHWH’s righteousness and justice (Torah) cannot overlook sin, it requires a penalty payment.

In the context of Romans 2, the Torah can only justify the one who obeys it. This is part of the Two-Part Principle, the physical part, that is required as a way of living.

Since we are already guilty of violating it, it can no longer justify us, so we need to reach out to another source to access justification and the only other source of justification is Yahushua.

Once we are justified by Messiah, then what?

Well, Paul says in Romans 3:31 that we establish the Torah.

This has a double meaning; first, our belief in Messiah has established us righteous in the eyes of the Torah and second, the Torah is now established in our lives as the way we live as justified believers in Messiah.

“But,” a modern teacher would say, “if we attempt to keep the whole law, but fail in one point, we are guilty of all. That’s what the Bible says in James 2:10.”

Yes, this is true. Brother James does say this just a few verses before he tells us that belief without works is dead.

In the context of James 2, he is admonishing the brethren concerning discriminating among themselves, cliquing up, as it were, treating some of the brethren better than others.

He tells them that the “sovereign law” of the Scripture is to “Love your neighbor as yourself” and says that to violate this law by discriminating is a violation of the whole Torah.

He is NOT saying that believers no longer need to obey the Torah just because it is hard, as some would say, he is just saying to not discriminate because that is also a violation of the Torah, just like stealing or murder.

But, then, how can we be required to obey the Torah, when it is so hard to do so, and how do we avoid condemnation again if we struggle in our obedience?

Well, Messiah has already paid the price for sin, and not just for the sins of the believer (1 John 2:2), however, to receive forgiveness for sin we must accept Yahushua as Savior and begin living righteous lives through obedience to the Torah.

Those of us who have believed in Him have been justified from the death penalty for sin, and we no longer sin.

**1Jn 3:6**  Everyone staying in Him does not sin. Everyone sinning has neither seen Him nor known Him.

This means that believers no longer disobey the Torah, because sin is defined as disobedience

to the Torah.

**1Jn 3:4**  Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

**NOTE**: The word for “lawlessness” here is “anomia”, which in Greek means, “no law/torah doing”.

But sometimes we do slip up and violate a command of Torah, and in those cases, Yahushua helps us as our Intercessor before YHWH.

**1Jn 2:1**  My little children, I write this to you, so that you do not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Intercessor with the Father, יהושע Messiah, a righteous One.

He can act as Intercessor for us when we sin unintentionally, and by that we mean that it is never our intent to disobey the Torah, but sometimes our flesh gets in the way and drags us into disobedience (See: Romans 7:15-25).

The key word in the above statement is “intent”. The Torah commands the believer to, “love יהוה your Elohim with **all your heart**, and with **all your being**, and with **all your might**” for all “these Words which I am commanding you today **shall be in your heart**, and you shall **impress them upon your children**, and **shall speak of them when you sit in your house**, **and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up**, and shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and **they shall be as frontlets between your eyes**.” (Deut 6:4-8)

We are to have circumcised hearts (Rom 2:29) of obedience and the commands of the Torah are to be in our heart to obey them. It is what we should be thinking about and talking about wherever we are and wherever we go.

The phrase “shall be in your heart” speaks of intent. It should be every believer’s sincere intent to obey the Torah in every situation of life, which is what John (Yochanan) means when he says a believer “does not sin” in 1 John 1:36.

This idea of intent is what YHWH means when He says the He, “seeks what is pursued”. Our primary passage in Ecclesiastes 3:14-15 is telling us that, because of the work of Yahushua, YHWH no longer has to judge us solely on the strictness of the Torah but can judge those of us who believe based on the sincerity of our hearts.

This is how we know that this section of verse 15 starts with “but” and not “and”. The author is describing the contrast between the Torah, which requires payment for sin, and Yahushua, which allows YHWH to judge our intent.

How can we know for sure that this statement, “seeks what is pursued”, refers to YHWH’s ability to extend mercy in judgment because of the work of Yahushua?

The “את” tells the story.

והאלהים יבקשׁ **את**־נרדף׃ Ecc 3:15c

The “את” represents Yahushua, the Word made flesh, who came to deliver us from the penalty of death and intercede for us as we make our wilderness journey, awaiting His return and the Kingdom.

YHWH is able to judge our intent in stead of our failure because of Yahushua, and the evidence of this truth is right here in this passage.

Just as John knew that the Word was in the beginning with Elohim and was Elohim, because of the presence of the “את” in Genesis 1:1.

The Messianic writers, in the same way, understood that our belief in Messiah would protect us from future condemnation for unintentional sin, because of the presence of the “את” here in Ecclesiastes 3:15, as well as many other places in the Hebrew text.

REMEMBER, as believers in Yahushua, we are required to obey the Torah of YHWH, as it was given through Mosheh at Mt. Sinai, without additions and subtractions, with all of our hearts, minds and strength, while keeping our trust firmly in the work of Yahushua.

This Two-Part Principle, belief and works, allows YHWH to extend mercy to the believer when he stumbles, as long as the focus of his trust is firmly in Yahushua and not in the works of Torah.

Shalom.