AND THE WORD IS…

The Scripture has two sides; one is positive and the other negative. One could relate the positive side to the spiritual and the negative to the fleshly. I say this because the spiritual side is one of trust, proven in obedience while the fleshly side is one of self, proven by willfulness.

The Word of YHWH is a guide book that instructs us in how to live in the spiritual mindset and thereby inherit the Kingdom. As the Emissary Paul said in his writing to the Assembly in Rome (7:14) “the Law (Torah) is spiritual”.

This lesson asks the question, “What is the Word to us?” and we let the Word itself answer.

Isaiah 28 is YHWH’s answer and warning. There are many passages that will answer our question as well and we will look at some of them. However, to this author, this passage in Isaiah is the most profound and we hope the understanding of it will be revealed to you as we proceed.

Before we examine chapter 28, we must first look at the theme or context that began way back in Chapter 25 (**STOP**: Read all of Chapters 25 -27).

Chapter 25 is a proclamation of hope.

**Isa 25:1** O **יהוה**, You are my Elohim. I exalt You, I praise Your Name, for You shall do a wonder – counsels of long ago, trustworthiness, truth.

Here we see that it is YHWH who is proclaimed as Elohim. The word elohim is the plural form of the word eloah, which means ‘mighty one’, but is translated as god. In truth, the word eloah is a reference to authority. Our Elohim is a proclamation that YHWH is our authority and that it is in Him and Him only that we place our trust.

Declaring Him our Elohim, however, implies that we are committed to serving Him and Him only. To serve the One is to obey all that He sets before us. So, by calling YHWH our Elohim we proclaim that we have placed our complete trust in Him, and we will obey **everything** He says with all of our heart, mind and strength.

The rest of chapter 25 is a declaration of the hope we have in His return to bring in His Kingdom and complete our deliverance. In this passage He is called YHWH of hosts, which, in and of itself, is a prophetic utterance of the Mashiach, Yahushua.

From the perspective of the Messianic Writings we know that it is Yahushua who will return the second time to deliver the people of YHWH and usher in the Kingdom.

The next two chapters, 26 & 27, begin with the phrase, ‘In that day”. This phrase is a reference to the day in which He, Yahushua Ha-Mashiach, returns or what the Tanak calls “The Day of YHWH”.

The first nine verses of chapter 26 declares the heart and mind of the faithful servant who has placed his complete trust in YHWH and endeavors to walk in the righteousness set before him for he understands that it is only in the righteousness of YHWH that the hope of deliverance and inheritance comes. Verse 9 declares that it is only in the right-rulings of YHWH that we can learn righteousness.

This is a reference to what Mosheh said in Deuteronomy) 6:24-25.

**Deut 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.

**Deut 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.’

Here we see the Torah proclaim, it is in our commitment to ‘**guard to do all this command’** that we find the way of righteousness. This does not say ten of the commands or two commands but all of the command, every-thing that YHWH has spoken. The Mashiach Himself declared this very thing when He quoted from Deuteronomy 8.

**Mat 4:4** But He answering, said, “It has been written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but **by every word that comes from the mouth of** יהוה.’ (Deut 8:1-3) ”

**EVERY WORD**, not just some of them! It is in a heart committed to complete obedience that a man lives in the righteousness of YHWH. It is to these types of people, those with a sincere commitment to obey, that Isaiah 26:1-9 is referring to.

However, in verse 10 he refers to a different kind of person, one who finds favour (grace) and yet will not obey.

**Isa 26:10** The wrong finds favour *yet* **he shall not learn righteousness**; in the land of straightforwardness **he acts perversely**, and **does not see the excellency of** יהוה.

It is clear in this passage that these people, ones called the wrong, are those who have received His favour. The word favour here is ‘chânan’ and it is the root word for ‘chen’ which is the Hebrew word for grace. The definition of ‘chânan’ is profound, it means ‘*to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior’.*

The common definition for grace in modern Christian circles is ‘unmerited favor’, which does fit the biblical concept of grace (i.e. He did for us what we could not do for ourselves) and is consistent with the meaning of the Hebrew word ‘chânan’ (i.e. ‘For He [YHWH} made Him [Yahushua] who knew no sin to [stoop down in kindness and] be sin for us [His Inferiors] so that in Him we might become the righteousness of Elohim.’-2Cor 5:21).

So, though these ‘wrong ones’ have received His favour they refuse to learn righteousness (to do all He has said) but instead they ‘act perversely’ (disobey) and do not see the excellency (majesty) of YHWH.

Because they refuse to obey His Torah, they do not understand the greatness or fullness of YHWH. Though they claim to know Him they, by their actions, prove they do not and thus shall not find reward or inheritance at His return.

Verse 11 follows this same vein, the wrong, cannot see the fullness of YHWH but they do see the zeal (commitment) of the righteous and are ashamed of their lack of same which will bring upon them the consuming fires of YHWH’s wrath.

The rest of chapter 26 speaks of the peace which He will establish at His return when He shall destroy the remembrance of those who ruled over us and increase the nation. It refers to the time of distress that is coming and the resurrection.

Chapter 27 is similar in nature, in that it begins with ‘in that day’ when He shall bring His sword against Liwiathan. A leviathan is a large serpentine sea creature and is mostly a prophetic reference to the Dragon of Revelation 12 (Ha-Shatan). In Revelation it refers to a woman who is a symbol of His bride, Yisra’el, whom He protects from the power of the Dragon during the Great Tribulation.

Here in Isaiah 27 He refers to His people as a “vineyard of red wine’ whom He does guard. Verse 4 expresses that He has no wrath or ill will towards His People who **bear the fruit of righteousness** (obedience), but to those who bear thorns and thistles (disobedience) He brings fire.

This is consistent with what Yahushua said to His taught ones in John (Yochanan) 15:1-7,

**John 15:1** “I am the true vine, and My Father is the gardener.

**John 15:2** “Every branch in Me that **bears no fruit He takes away**. And every branch that bears fruit He prunes, so that it bears more fruit.

**John 15:3** “You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you.

**John 15:4** “Stay in Me, and I *stay* in you. As the branch is unable to bear fruit of itself, unless it stays in the vine, so neither you, unless you stay in Me.

**John 15:5** “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who stays in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit. Because without Me you are able to do naught!

**John 15:6** “**If anyone does not stay in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up. And they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.**

And what the author of Hebrews (Ibrim) said in Chapter 6, verses 4-8

**Heb 6:4** For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Set-apart Spirit,

**Heb 6:5** and have tasted the good Word of Elohim and the powers of the age to come,

**Heb 6:6** and fall away, to renew them again to repentance – having impaled for themselves the Son of Elohim again, and put Him to open shame.

**Heb 6:7** For ground that is drinking the rain often falling on it, and is bearing plants fit for those by whom it is tilled, receives blessing from Elohim,

**Heb 6:8** **but if it brings forth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and near to being cursed, and ends up by being burned.**

(See also: Heb 10:26-31)

In verse 5 and 6 of Isaiah 27, it mentions those who would ‘take hold’ of Yah’s strength (faith in Yahushua) which would put them at peace with Him (see Ephesians 2:11-19).

He refers to them as those whom He causes to ‘take root in Ya’aqob’ and that Yisra’el shall take bloom to fill the whole earth. This is a reference to what Paul is referring to in Romans 11:13-26 where he teaches that the Gentiles (nations) who come to the faith shall be ‘grafted’ into the ‘natural olive tree’ that is Yisra’el.

Verses 7-11 references the historical fact of His temporarily turning His face from Yisra’el until the end times when He shall return to restore them.

Verse 12 begins with ‘in that day’ when he shall bring Yisra’el back from among the nations.

Verse 13 references the blowing of the Great Shofar (ram’s horn) which signifies the Yobel or Jubilee of rest for His people (The Last / Seventh Trumpet).

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Now we come to Chapter 28, our primary passage of study.

**Isa 28:1** Woe to the **proud crown of the drunkards of Ephrayim**, and to **the fading flower of its splendid comeliness** that is on the head of the fertile valley, to those who are overcome with wine!

There is a lot of symbolism here that needs to be understood. The ‘proud crown’ is a reference to a leadership that has went its own way and no longer walk in or lead others in the right way.

The phrase “drunkards of Ephrayim” is a reference to the northern Kingdom of Yisra’el who were exiled into the nations in about 722bc because of their idolatry and willful lack of self control (disobedience).

In general this verse is focused on Yisra’el (or those who claim to be of them: i.e. the so-called Spiritual Israel) and her waywardness. She is called to righteousness but does not live in it

**Isa 28:2** See, **יהוה** has **one** who is mighty and strong, like a downpour of hail and a destroying storm, like a flood of mighty waters overflowing, **who casts down to the earth with the hand**.

Because of it, YHWH is sending a strong ‘hail’ against her that shall over flow the earth and cast it down. This is a reference to the return of the Mashiach who will bring with Him the ‘flaming fire’ of YHWH’s wrath (see 2 Thes 1:7-10).

**Isa 28:3** The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephrayim is trampled underfoot;

**Isa 28:4** and the fading flower of its splendid comeliness that is on the head of the fertile valley, like the first fruit before the summer, which, when one sees it, he eats it up while it is still in his hand.

When He does return, He shall deal with those who have went the way of the drunkard and lived in unrighteousness, especially those of the leadership who led the people astray.

**Isa 28:5** In that day **יהוה** of hosts is for a crown of splendour and a head-dress of comeliness to the remnant of His people,

**Isa 28:6** and **a spirit of right-ruling to him who sits in right-ruling**, and strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.

Here again we see ‘in that day’ but in this case it mentions ‘YHWH of Hosts’. This is a prophetic reference to Yahushua Ha-Mashiach who will be the Crown or head of the house in that day and a spirit of righteousness to him who sits in right-ruling’.

This is an interesting statement because it implies that the Mashiach will be the spirit of righteousness only to those who sit or have taken their place in right-ruling.

For those who do not understand what this means, let us clarify. The righteousness that covers us because of our belief in Yahushua’s death, burial and resurrection, i.e. the gospel, is connected to our submission to the right-rulings that were set forth as the standard of righteousness that all men should live by.

Consider Ephesians 2:8-10,

**Eph 2:8** For by favour you have been saved, through belief, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of Elohim,

**Eph 2:9**  it is not by works, so that no one should boast.

**Eph 2:10** For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah **יהושע** unto good works, **which Elohim prepared beforehand that we should walk in them**.

We see here that verses 8 and 9 refer directly to the grace (favour) of YHWH that is granted to us based on what we believe and not based on how we have lived.

However, verse 10 says that once we have believed, we have become YHWH’s ‘workmanship’ (handiwork) in Mashiach to do the good works that He, YHWH, prepared ‘beforehand’ that we should walk in (live by). This really isn’t hard to understand if you have a heart that is open and willing to do whatever the Master asks of you.

In this passage Paul is stating that doing the works of the Torah (Law) is not the reason YHWH has extended His grace to us, but He has done so because we have trusted in the work of His Son, Yahushua.

However, after we have believed in Yahushua for justification from death, then the Torah is the standard of good works that He set forth for His people to live by and we as His people are expected to live in them.

Earning His grace through obedience to the Torah is impossible because it was the Torah that condemned us to death when we disobeyed it and in our flesh, it is impossible to keep it perfectly, but once we have received His grace, the Torah is the Way of life through which all righteous men are to live. The Torah is the only standard of righteousness ever given which we are commanded to live by.

And Romans 7:14,24-25/8:1

**Rom7:14** For we know that the Torah is Spiritual, but I am fleshly, sold under sin.

**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 law of sin.

**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.

The Torah (Law) is spiritual but we are fleshly, sold out to sin.

What we see here is the truth of the two parts, one which is heavenly or spiritual and the other which is earthly or physical.

The Torah, which comes from the mouth of YHWH is of the heavenly and is spiritual in nature. Our bodies, which have been created from the dust of the ground (Gen 2:7) are earthly or physical in nature.

Herein lays the foundation of Paul’s argument in Romans 7 and 8. Once we have been “born again’ in the spirit man through belief in Yahushua it is our earnest desire to obey YHWH but our physical body still craves the things that are contrary to the things of YHWH.

How do we overcome this physical body that is striving hourly to destroy us by causing us to desire that which is not pleasing to Him? It is through our belief in Yahushua Ha-Mashiach.

Now that we are in Him, we are to strive to obey the Torah of YHWH even though our bodies strive to disobey it.

Having this foundation makes understanding Romans 8:1 much easier and consistent with everything the Scripture says.

Those of us who have believed in Yahushua no longer have to fear condemnation **IF** we strive to obey the Torah and avoid obeying our bodies rebellious desires. We have a choice as to whom we will obey. (see Deut 30:10-20 and Rom 6:15-16).

So, the truth is that our belief in the Mashiach must be followed up by obedience to His Torah if we hope to experience the majesty and deliverance of YHWH in that day.(see Jam 2:14-26)

Now, back to our primary passage, Isaiah 28.

**Isa 28:7** And these too have gone astray through wine, and through strong drink wandered about. Priest and prophet have gone astray through strong drink, they are swallowed up by wine, they wander about through strong drink, they go astray in vision, they stumble in right-ruling.

**Isa 28:8** For all tables shall be covered with vomit, no place without filth.

In verses 7 and 8 we see YHWH saying it is the leadership, the priest and prophets, who have given themselves over to drunkenness. Drunkenness is a metaphor for lack of self control or willfulness. Basically, He is saying they have gone their own way like a drunkard, stumbling to and fro, straying from the true path.

Because of this the feast that they hope to attend ‘in that day’ (the marriage supper) will be covered in vomit and filth. It must be understood that these afore mentioned people, these priest and prophets, have went astray because they followed their own way and not the Way of YHWH as He set forth in His Word (See: Isaiah 29:13-20).

This is vitally important, even though they are believers and claim to be His people they do not understand because of their waywardness, their straying from His Torah, and they will be destroyed because they did not understand.

Consider Deuteronomy 4:1-9,

**Deut 4:1** “And now, O Yisra’el, **listen to the laws and the right-rulings which I am teaching you** to do, so that you live, and shall go in and possess the land which **יהוה** Elohim of your fathers is giving you.

**Deut 4:2** “**Do not add to the Word which I command you, and do not take away from it, so as to guard the commands of** יהוה **your Elohim which I am commanding you**.

**Deut 4:3** “Your eyes have seen what **יהוה** did at Baʽal Peʽor, for **יהוה** your Elohim has destroyed from your midst all the men who followed Baʽal Peʽor.

**Deut 4:4** “But you who are clinging to **יהוה** your Elohim are alive today, every one of you.

**Deut 4:5** “See, **I have taught you laws and right-rulings,** as **יהוה** my Elohim commanded me, to do thus in the land which you go to possess.

**Deut 4:6** “And **you shall guard and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding** before the eyes of the peoples who hear all these laws, and they shall say, ‘Only a wise and understanding people is this great nation!’

**Deut 4:7** “For what great nation is there which has Elohim so near to it, as **יהוה** our Elohim is to us, whenever we call on Him?

**Deut 4:8** “And what great nation is there that has such laws and righteous right-rulings like all this Torah which I set before you this day?

**Deut 4:9** “Only, **guard yourself, and guard your life diligently, lest you forget the Words your eyes have seen, and lest they turn aside from your heart** all the days of your life. **And you shall make them known to your children and your grandchildren**

We must remember that everything written in the Tanak was for our admonition, a warning so that we don’t make the same errors that they made (1 Cor 10:1-12 and Heb 3:1- 4:11).

This being true, we understand that the reference in verse 1 to the Promised Land is a shadow picture of the future Kingdom, thus these ‘laws and right-rulings’ are for those going into that Kingdom.

We are commanded strictly to adhere to them without addition or subtraction. We are to **guard and do** **them for they are our wisdom and understanding** before the nations (world).

We are to guard ourselves and our lives so as **not to forget them** **and turn our hearts away from obeying them**. And we are **to teach them to the generations after us**. In this we have failed miserably, generation after generation.

This is the context of Isaiah 28, which is a warning to all those who would call themselves the household of YHWH. He is warning us so that we do not continue in the ignorance and rebellion of our ancestors. Now, beginning in verse 9 He is going to teach us something vital.

**Isaiah28: 9-29**

**Isa 28:9** Whom would He teach knowledge? And whom would He make to understand the message? Those weaned from milk, those taken from the breasts!

Verse 9 is a question and an answer. First, He asks us who He would give knowledge and understanding to. We already know from Debarim 6:5-6 that He gives such to those who would **guard and do His Torah,** but He goes further here in saying that they must have been ‘weaned from the milk and no longer on the breast’.

The breast milk is the first thing that a child feeds on because he is not mature enough to chew and digest solid food. Though a child can grow and be healthy on mother’s milk he cannot thrive into maturity unless he gets beyond the milk and begins to eat solid, nutritional food.

This is what is being said here as well. The new believer cannot continue in the milk of the Word, the first things, and grow in a mature knowledge and understanding of the Word of Yah. He must get beyond the milk and into the meat. Paul speaks of this very thing in his letter to the believers in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

**Cor 3:1** And I, brothers, was not able to speak to you as to spiritual ones but as to fleshly, as to babes in Messiah.

**Cor 3:2** I fed you with milk and not with solid food, for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able,

**Cor 3:3** for you are still fleshly. For since there is envy, and strife, and divisions among you, are you not fleshly and walking according to man?

Keeping in mind what has already been said in this lesson, let us look at what Paul is saying concerning the believers here.

He refers to them as babes in Mashiach and that he was not able to speak to them as Spiritual ones. A Spiritual one is one who is mature in the belief but not just any kind of mature. A mature one in the Scripture is one who WALKS upright, one who is spiritual according to the Scriptural definition.

According to Paul himself it is the “Torah that is spiritual” (Rom 7:14) and it is also “holy, righteous and good” (Rom 7:12). By definition then, a holy, righteous, good and spiritual man would be one who walks in obedience to the Torah.

He could not speak to the Corinthian believers about spiritual things because they were not **walking in** the spirit (obedience) even though they were **in** the spirit (believers). There is a huge difference between **being in** the spirit and **walking in** the spirit.

All it takes to be in the spirit is to have confessed belief in the Good News of Yahushua’s death, burial and resurrection. Once this is done, we are born again in the spirit or inner man. Paul speaks of this distinction in Romans 7 and 8 in his discussion where he contrasts the inner man/mind/spirit and his members/body/flesh.

Every believer is of two minds, one spiritual and one fleshly. The first mind (spiritual) is focused on the things above, heavenly things, and is motivated by rational thought, it makes choices based on what it knows to be true, i.e. the Torah.

The second mind (fleshly) is focused on the things beneath, earthly things, and is motivated my emotional thoughts, it makes choices based on instinct and feelings.

The first mind is the spiritual and the second is the fleshly. Paul says that the fleshly mind cannot please Elohim because it does not subject itself to the Torah (Law) of YHWH (Rom 8:6-7).

To Paul, the milk of the Word is the Good New (the gospel) of the Mashiach and the strong meat is the Torah. The first is how we get in the spirit and the other is how we live or walk in the spirit. Remember the two parts, belief which is spiritual and obedience which is physical, both required to be complete.

Keeping this in mine we look at YeshaYahu 28:9 again and we see we cannot receive the knowledge and understanding of the things of YHWH unless we get past the Good News of belief and into meat of obedience as described in Deuteronomy 6:5-6.

**Isa 28:10** For it is: command upon command, command upon command, l line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.

**Isa 28:11** For with a jabbering lip and a foreign tongue He speaks to this people,

Verses 10 and 11 express the way in which YHWH has written His Word down. It is written in such a way that it sounds like someone speaking in a foreign language and, in fact, most people today, even believers, claim the Scripture makes no sense to them.

Even so-called bible scholars have studied the Scripture for decades and yet still do not understand the very basic principles of the Word. You can’t tell them that of course, they know it all.

Basically, the Word was given to us like a jigsaw puzzle and must be put together in the same manner you would put a puzzle together, piece by piece. The first thing a good puzzler does is separate the edge pieces from the others and then they put the edge pieces together to form the border.

Once this is done there is a general understanding of where a large portion of the pieces will go based on the color scheme of the puzzle. In any puzzle of landscapes, it is easy to see where the horizon is and you can build from there.

In the Word, the Torah is the border or foundation within which all the other pieces must fit into place. Yahushua is the corner stone or piece from which all the edge pieces are measured.

Mashiach

The diagram above is meant to express the way a corner stone is used to build a foundation. The corner stone is laid down and then lines are measured from it to determine where the other stones must be placed to ensure that the foundation is square.

Scripturally, Yahushua Ha-Mashiach (Messiah) is the Chief Corner Stone and it is upon Him that all of the rest of Scripture is measured and laid down. The Torah, or what is wrongfully translated as the Law, is the rest of the foundation laid down in Mashiach and everything it teaches is in perfect agreement with Him.

This foundational principle reveals the Two-Part Principle clearly. The corner stone, Mashiach, is the spiritual part of our foundation and is based on belief. This is why belief must come first; everything else rests upon that faith. Once that corner stone of belief is laid down, then our adherence to the Torah is laid down in accordance with the boundary lines that radiate from the corner stone.

Upon this foundation, belief and Torah, spiritual and physical, the true Assembly is built and anything less ends in death.

**Isa 28:12** to whom He said, “This is the rest, give rest to the weary,” and, “This is the refreshing.” **But they would not hear**.

Verse 12 is confirmation of what was just said. Here He says that the Word which was given to us is where we will find our rest, it’s our restoration but we would not hear.

The word here translated as hear is ‘shama’, which is the root word for ‘shema’. The Shema is the first thing a little Hebrew child learns in the belief. It goes;

Shema, Yisra’el YHWH Eloheynu, YHWH echad!

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Hear, O’ Yisra’el, YHWH is our Elohim, YHWH is One!

The word ‘shama’ is translated as hear, however, it has a meaning that runs deeper than just to hear something.

The Hebrew language is a vowel or action-based language, so every word implies movement or the intent of action. The word ‘shama’ then means to *listen with the intent to obey.*

Because Yisra’el did not have a submitted heart, the Word that was given to them never gave them the rest that it promise. They missed their rest **because they did not obey**.

They did not understand the Word even though they had the Word and studied it profusely. All their study of the Word was of no value to them because their heart was not committed to obeying it.

**Isa 28:13**  But the Word of **יהוה** was to them, “Command upon command, command upon command, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little,” **so that they go and shall stumble backward, and be broken and snared and taken captive**.

Because of their rebellious heart the Word that was meant to give life ended up condemning them to death. Was that the reason the Torah was given? **NO!** Torah was given to us to teach us how to live; it is our rebelliousness that condemns us.

See Romans 7:7-14

**Rom 7:7** What, then, shall we say? Is the Torah sin? Let it not be! However, **I did not know sin except through the Torah**. For also the covetousness I knew not if the Torah had not said, “You shall not covet.”

**Rom 7:8** But sin, having taken the occasion through the command, did work in me all *sorts of* covetousness. For apart from Torah sin is dead.

**Rom 7:9** And I was alive apart from the Torah once, but when the command came, the sin revived, and I died.

**Rom 7:10** And **the command which was to result in life, this I found to result in death.**

**Rom 7:11 For** sin, having taken the occasion through the command, deceived me, and through it killed *me*.

**Rom 7:12** So that **the Torah truly is set-apart, and the command set-apart, and righteous, and good.**

**Rom 7:13** Therefore, has that which is good become death to me? Let it not be! But the sin, that sin might be manifest, was working death in me through what is good, so that sin through the command might become an exceedingly great Sinner.

**Rom 7:14** For we know that the **Torah is Spiritual, but I am fleshly,** sold under sin.

Paul asks us whether the Torah itself is sin and his answer is no. Why? According the Word, the Torah is the standard of righteousness and Yochanan (John 4:3) says that the definition of sin is the ‘transgression of the Law (Torah)’. Thus, the Torah is the measuring stick upon which sin is defined. He is going to state that very thing in this verse.

He says, ‘I did not know sin except through the Torah’ and also in Romans 3:20, ‘for by the Torah is the knowledge of sin’. The Torah is the measuring stick or the plumb bob by which righteousness is measured; it determines what sin is and what sin is not. **NO ONE** else has the authority to add to it or take from it or in any other way change it.

Paul goes on to say that once he knew what the Torah said, his own flesh (sin) caused him to desire the very thing that the Torah forbade. Because of this, our rebellious members proved that the Torah was good, and the Torah declared our flesh to be exceedingly sinful.

Going back to YeshaYahu 28 we see that the Word was meant to give rest, but it actually becomes a stumbling block of destruction to those who do not obey it.

**Isa 28:14** Therefore hear the Word of **יהוה**, you men of scorn, who rule this people who are in Yerushalayim,

**Isa 28:15** because you have said, “We have made a covenant with death, and with the grave we have effected a vision. When the overflowing scourge passes through, it does not come to us, for we have made lying our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves.”

Here we see that He is speaking against the leadership again and calls them ‘men of scorn’. The word for scorn here is ‘lâtsôn’ and is defined as *derision,* which generally means *to ridicule or mock, to speak out against.* These men, then, are those who mock the Word of YHWH in some way.

Verse 15 says they have made a ‘covenant with death’ and have ‘effected avision with the grave (sheol)’, which is explained later on as having made ‘lying their refuge’ and ‘hiding under falsehood’. These leaders are living and teaching a covenant of lies that will end in death. They have placed their trust in a vision that is founded in a deception.

They believe that when the ‘overflowing scourge’ (Wrath of YHWH) passes through they will not be overtaken by it. This hope of theirs, this “faith” they are basing their eternal existence on is founded in a covenant of lies and deception. Let’s reason this out a bit to get a better understanding.

First, to scorn or mock someone is to speak out against or live in a way that is in opposition to the way that person has instructed.

Second, since YHWH has said that His Torah is the Way of righteousness, these mockers are those who **do not live in obedience** to it and as leaders are **speaking out against it**, saying things like, “belief in Jesus means we no longer need to obey the Law”.

Third, since disobeying the Torah is sin and the penalty of sin is death, then by definition a ‘covenant of death’ is a covenant of disobedience. So, these people are teaching and trusting in a covenant that allows them to disobey the Torah.

We have already shown that the context of this passage concerns those who have the words of rest but because they do not have the heart to obey them, the Word rest and reconciliation has become a stumbling block for them, that they will fall back and be destroyed.

**REMEMBER**, the entirety of Scripture teaches that obedience brings life and disobedience brings death. The Torah is only life and rest to those who are obeying it, but it is confusion and death to those who refuse to obey it.

**Isa 28:16** Therefore thus said the Master יהוה, “See, I am laying in Tsiyon a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a settled foundation. He who trusts shall not hasten away.

**Isa 28:17** And I shall make right-ruling the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet. And the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lying, and the waters overflow the hiding place.

Because YHWH is a loving and merciful Elohim, He wants none to perish and so He gives them a chance and this chance is the Stone of the Foundation- the Chief Corner Stone- Yahushua and he that places their trust in Him shall not hasten or pass away.

Verse 16 represents the first part of the Two-Part Principle; it’s the spiritual part of belief. This part is YHWH’s responsibility, something He has done for us that we cannot do for ourselves, this part is favor (grace) through belief.

Verse 17 is our part, the physical part, that all His people are responsible to live by and will be accountable to. This part is the works part of our belief and is lived out in obedience to the Torah without additions or subtractions.

If we look closely to what verse 17 is saying, we see that YHWH is making ‘right-ruling the measuring line and righteousness the plummet’, this is a reference to His Torah. The Torah is the (only) standard of righteousness, as we have already seen in Deuteronomy 6:24-25, and the right-rulings or judgments we make in any given situation must be made righteously in adherence to Torah principles.

Notice, He says that when the hail (wrath) comes it will sweep away the **refuge of lying** and the waters will overflow the hidden places. This means that the covenant of death they are trusting in will be washed away and do them no good.

**Isa 28:18** And your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your vision with the grave not stand. When an overflowing scourge passes through, then you shall be trampled down by it.

**Isa 28:19** As often as it passes through it shall take you, for it shall pass through every morning, and by day and by night. And it shall be only trembling to understand the message.”

Here is conformation of the interpretation of verse 17. We see that the covenant of death shall be annulled, meaning that it has no power and that when the wrath comes, those who have been trusting in this covenant of disobedience will be trampled down as often as the wrath passes through.

Verse 19 also says ‘it shall be only trembling to understand the message’. Imagine thousands of people out there that have placed their trust in a doctrine of salvation that does not require them to obey YHWH’s Torah.

Imagine that you too believe that this “No Law” doctrine they are trusting in, gives you assurance that you will be snatched away before Yahushua comes to punish the rest of humanity for their sins.

Imagine what it would be like for this group when they are **not** snatched away beforehand and that when the Mashiach does return to gather His people, they are **not** counted among them because they refused to obey the Torah.

Don’t you think they might be trembling to understand why?

Consider Matthew 7:21-23

**Mat 7:21** “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Master, Master,’ shall enter into the reign of the heavens, but **he who is doing the desire of My Father** in the heavens.

**Mat 7:22** “Many shall say to Me in that day, ‘Master, Master, have we not prophesied in Your Name, and cast out demons in Your Name, and done many mighty works in Your Name?’

**Mat 7:23** “And then I shall declare to them, ‘I never knew you, depart from Me, **you who work lawlessness!’**

This is just one of many verses I could use in the Messianic Writings to show this principle, for example John 15:1-7; Hebrews 6:1-8 and 10;26-31; 2 Peter 3:17-22, to name a few.

Anyway, in this passage we have two kinds of people; the first shall enter the rest of the Messianic Kingdom because they have done the desire of the Father and the second who shall be rejected because they **worked lawlessness**.

This seems pretty easy to understand at first glance, but, unfortunately, there are thousands and even millions of people out there who have absolutely no idea what is actually being said here because they allow men to explain it to them, instead of letting the words speak for themselves.

To help clarify what is being said, let’s allow the scripture to explain itself and to keep things simple we will use the Messianic Writings to define them.

We say this because every time we talk to a so-called ‘New Testament’ believer and open the Scripture to something in the Tanak (OT) to define things written in the Messianic Writings, they say something really stupid like, ‘uh, that’s in the Old Testament’ as if somehow what YHWH said back then has lost its value today.

So, what does it mean to be ‘doing the will of the Father’? Well, we like to use Paul’s writings whenever possible to define things because he is the one the church always points to when ‘proving’ that the Torah no longer applies to us today.

According to Paul, in Romans 2:17-18, the Jews know the will of Elohim.

**Rom 2:17** See, you are called a Yehuḏite, and rest on the Torah, and make your boast in Elohim,

**Rom 2:18** and **know the desire *of Elohim***, and approve what is superior, **being instructed out of the Torah,**

The Jews know the will of YHWH because they are instructed out of the Torah. It’s the Torah that defines the will of YHWH. He Himself laid out for us the exact blue print for on how we should live before Him.

Since, as we have shown, the Mashiach is the Word (Torah) made flesh and that He is the Chief Corner Stone of the foundation that is the Torah, it is only reasonable that the will of YHWH for His people would be for them to believe in His Son and to obey the Torah as He did.

Now, having said that, just because the Jews know the will of YHWH doesn’t mean they are in His will. In fact, this passage goes on to say that they were not and since they still practice the same error today that their ancestors were in the Mashiach’s time, then they are not in His will today either.

This prompts me to ask the Messianic brethren, why do we try so hard to be like the Jews? They may be of the natural seed of Abraham, but they are not of the belief of Abraham and they practice the very things today that Yahushua intentionally violated and spoke out against back then.

Going on, ‘you who work lawlessness’ is pretty simple to understand but, in most bibles, the translators used the phrase, ‘workers of iniquity’ or ‘ye that work iniquity’ instead, so let’s dissect this phrase to get a clearer understanding.

The Greek word for workers here is ‘ergazomai’ which means *to toil, to labor or to do.*

The Greek word for iniquity here is ‘anomia’, which we will break down to its smallest elements to better explain its meaning.

1) ‘a’ – is the negative prefix meaning *no or not*

2) ‘nom’ – is the word ‘nomos’ which is the Greek word used to translate the Hebrew word Torah. It comes from the unused root ‘nemo’ which means *to parcel out.*

\*Note: The root word for Torah is ‘yarah’ and means to *flow out,* while the root word for nomos is ‘nemo’ meaning to parcel or give out by measure. Nomos is the closest Greek word to the meaning of the word Torah and they both refer to something going out. In the context of scripture, they should be translated as instruction not law. Remember, the words in the Greek writings are the approximate renderings for the meanings of the original Hebrew words used in the Hebrew writings so when in conflict the Hebrew meanings must take precedent.

3) ‘ia’ - is an active participle and though not always translated it carries the meaning of *doing or acting*.

So, the meaning of ‘ye who work iniquity’ is actually *you who do no law* (Torah). To substantiate his translation, we look to 1 John 3:4 (KJV).

**John 3:4** Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the **transgression of the law** [anomia].

By John’s definition, ‘anomia’ means transgressing (violating, disobeying) the Torah.

Going back to Matthew 7:23, we see that even though these people believed in Him, and used His Name to do great miracles, He rejected them **because they did no obey the Torah.**

These are the people today who are in this covenant with death mentioned in YeshaYahu 28, believing falsely in the deception that when His wrath comes they will not have to endure it.

Consider also: 1 Thes 2: 8-12

**1 Thes 2:8** And then **the lawless one** shall be revealed, whom the Master shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth and bring to naught with the manifestation of His coming.

**1 Thes 2:9** The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, **with all power and signs and wonders of falsehood,**

**1 Thes 2:10** and with all **deceit of unrighteousness** in those perishing, because **they did not receive the love of the truth,** in order for them to be saved.

**1 Thes 2:11**  And for this reason **Elohim sends them a working of delusion**, for them to believe the falsehood,

**1 Thes 2:12** in order that all should be judged who **did not believe the truth, but have delighted in the unrighteousness.**

There is going to be someone coming on the scene who will do great signs and wonders, but Paul calls him the **lawless one**. The Master will consume the works of this lawless man and with him all those who loved being unrighteous.

Many modern teachers refuse to consider that they themselves could be caught up in this delusion because they know ‘Jesus’ who is ‘the Way, the Truth and the Life’. However, the Scripture also says that the Word is the Truth (John 17:17) and it is the Word of Truth (Torah-Ps 119:142) that sanctifies those who live by it.

The ‘working of delusion’ is the covenant of death mentioned in YeshaYahu 28 and if the so-called Church does not get its head out of the sand of this man-made dogma of lawlessness, it will stand before the Judgment seat condemned and the overflowing scourge of His wrath shall consume them.

Back to YeshaYahu 28 to see if it can validate the things being said here.

**Isa 28:20** For the bed shall be too short for a man to stretch out on, and the covering shall be too narrow to wrap himself in it

.

Two things are being said here and they are both profound and frightening. First, ‘the bed shall be too short for a man to stretch out on’. The symbolism here is interesting because a bed has to do with resting. We know that earlier in verse 12, we are told that it is the Word which is our rest **IF we** hear it with the intent to obey it, but if we choose to not obey it we shall be destroyed.

Contextually then, if we make the lie of lawlessness our refuge then when His wrath comes, we will find no refuge, no rest and it will overtake us.

So, this bed symbolizes the physical part, the Torah part of this verse and since it is based in the hope of a covenant that allows its adherents to live in violation of the Torah, then that bed will not give them rest in that day.

Second, ‘the covering shall be too narrow to wrap himself in it’. This symbolizes the spiritual part, the belief part of this passage and since this covenant is one based in death through the transgression of the Torah, the blood of the Mashiach who is our covering, will not cover us, nor deliver us from His wrath.

‘Faith without works is dead’ according to James 2:26 and those who are trusting in a covenant of blood that rejects the requirement of Torah, is trusting in a covenant of death that will not spare them in that day.

The conclusion of what we have seen is quite simple; the Word was given to us in a way that only those who have a heart of obedience can understand it and find rest in it. On the other hand, those whose hearts are not submitted to obeying it will stumble to understand it and be destroyed in their disobedience.

Even those who have received the stumbling stone (Messiah), yet do not live in the righteousness that He demands, will find no rest though they believe they will.

**Isa 28:21** For **יהוה** rises up as at Mount Peratsim, and He is wroth as at the Valley of Giḇʽon, to do His work, His strange work, and to do His deed, His strange deed.

**Isa 28:22** And now, do not be scoffers, lest your bonds be made strong. For I have heard from the Master **יהוה** of hosts, a destruction decreed upon all the earth.

Here then is the prophetic promise of His coming wrath to deal with the earth and a warning to us, not to scoff lest He gives us over to the delusion in that day (2 Thes 2:1-12).

The rest of chapter 28 uses two metaphors, the first is concerning plowing, sowing and reaping, etc. (vs. 23-26)

**Isa 28:23** Give ear and hear my voice, listen and hear my Word.

**Isa 28:24** Does the ploughman keep ploughing all day to sow? Does he keep turning his soil and breaking the clods?

**Isa 28:25** When he has levelled its surface, does he not sow the caraway and scatter the cummin, plant the wheat in rows, the barley in the appointed place, and the spelt in its place?

**Isa 28:26** For He instructs him for right-ruling, his Elohim teaches him.

The interpretation is simple, once a man prepares the land by plowing it he must take the next step of sowing the seed.

The field is the man’s heart that has been made flesh through his belief in Yahushua (See Jer 31:31-33 and Eze 36:26) and once plowed the seed must be sown into it.

The seed is the Torah, His right-rulings, through which YHWH teaches man to live in righteousness.

Carefully read the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23, and you will find the same teaching there as here in Isaiah. In Matthew we are told that there are four types of soil upon which the seed is sown.

The soil represents the heart condition of a person and the result of planting seed there.

1. The “wayside” - does not understand and the Wicked One steals it
2. The “rocky place” - hears and receives, but trials cause it to stumble
3. “among thorns” - hears, but worries and desires choke it, fruitless
4. “good soil” - hears, understands, bears fruit (100/60/30)

Remember, understanding comes from obedience (Deut 4:5-6; Psa 119:97-104) so the “wayside” represents a heart condition of indifference, they have a hard heart.

The “rocky place” represents a heart condition that hears the Word with the intent to obey it, but the hardships of life and the struggle of the belief causes them to stumble away.

The seed sown “among thorns” is a heart condition that also hears with the intent to obey, but the worries of this life and the desire of worldly gain chokes out the commitment to obey.

The “good soil” represents a heart condition that not only hears with the intent to obey but is completely committed to living out the belief despite the cost.

Isaiah 28:23-26 represents this heart condition, one that not only plows the field, but sows the seed and bears fruit, but reaps the harvest as well, doing everything necessary to produce the righteousness YHWH requires.

This last portion is a metaphor concerning correction.

**Isa 28:27** For caraway is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a wagon wheel rolled over cummin, but caraway is beaten out with a stick, and cummin with a rod.

**Isa 28:28** Grain is crushed, so one does not go on threshing it forever, nor break it with his wagon wheel, nor crush it with his horsemen.

**Isa 28:29** Even this has come from יהוה of hosts, who did wonders in counsel, who made wisdom great.

As we struggle through this life trying to overcome this rebellious flesh and be fully committed to the Word of YHWH, we stumble sometimes, but in His mercy He brings correction to those who by their committed heart have proven they are sons, and a father, especially the Father, corrects those he loves.

His correction is hard for a short time but when it is complete it bears the fruit of maturity in the spiritual man.

**Hebrews 12:5-11**

**And you have forgotten the appeal which speaks to you as to sons, “My son, do not despise the discipline of יהוה, nor faint when you are reproved by Him, for whom יהוה loves, He disciplines, and flogs every son whom He receives.”**

**If you endure discipline, Elohim is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom a father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become sharers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.**

**Moreover, we indeed had fathers of our flesh disciplining us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they indeed disciplined us for a few days as seemed best to them, but He does it for our profit, so that we might share His apartness.**

**And indeed, no discipline seems pleasant at the time, but grievous, but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**

Shalom and may the peace of YHWH overshadow you.