



**SEEING CLEARLY:
OVERCOMING
DECEPTION**

WE HAVE BEEN DECEIVED!

by Dr. Art Mathias

THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LETTER I HAVE EVER WRITTEN! PLEASE READ IT.

The last 20 years has been quite a journey that we have traveled at least partly together. 20 years ago the doctors told me I had less than 2 years to live. This set me on a journey and in this journey I discovered many things I had been taught in church and in my college degree in Bible were wrong. I was taught:

- God changed in how He deals with mankind in different time frames or dispensations
- In this time or age He no longer needs to heal since we have the written word
- He no longer speaks to us
- There was no such thing as the baptism of the Holy Spirit or speaking in tongues
- There was an age of law but now we are in an age or dispensation of grace
- In this time of grace I did not need to obey the "Old Testament" since it was "old" and replaced
- If I did obey the "Old Testament" I would then be "under the law" and must earn salvation
- That once I said a sinner's prayer all my sins, past, present and future were forgiven
- Since I was born again the devil could not bother me and I never need to repent again
- Etc.

As I struggled through the diseases and cried out to YHWH, He led and guided me in a supernatural way. He taught me that:

- He never changes
- He healed me
- He speaks to me
- I have received His power to do His work and His special language
- His Torah (Word) is His path to holiness and righteousness and healing
- All of my sins were not automatically forgiven.
- I need to forgive others and repent for my sins
- The devil is alive and well but I have authority over the devil
- Etc.

During this time I began to carefully examine the Scriptures and test everything that I had been taught. Jeremiah warned us in many passages that people had taught lies in His name and that our fathers have inherited lies, worthlessness and unprofitable things. (Jerm. 16:19) I found this to be true in just the few points above, and have realized there is much more.

Over the last 20 years I have continued in this journey and many of you have come to Wellspring Ministries for various reasons and have joined in this incredible journey seeking Him. This is why I am writing to you. There is much more!

As I mentioned above, I was raised in a church and graduated from the church college with a degree in Bible that taught that the Law or Torah was only for the Jews and those forced to earn their salvation. They taught that in various times or dispensations YHWH changed how He worked with or communicated with mankind. They taught that in reality there are two ways to be saved; one through grace and another through works which was defined as obedience to the “Law” and legalism. The theory taught there was the age of “Law” and now we are in the age of “Grace”. They taught that Grace and Law were opposed to each other. If you obeyed the “Old Testament” or “Law” you were putting yourself or others back “under the Law” thus requiring a person to earn their salvation. Is this true? NO! Remember Abraham was saved by faith. From the very beginning no one can earn salvation, it is not possible. This is a false argument designed to make us afraid of obedience to the Scriptures.

The Law versus Grace Doctrine in one way or another contains a threat that obedience to the Law (Torah) will require a person to earn salvation. Is this what the Scriptures teach? No! Remember Yeshua (Jesus) taught that “if you love Me you will obey me”. As we will see, Yeshua taught the Torah, which is the Law or in today’s vocabulary the “Old Testament.” He quoted it hundreds of times. In fact if you removed all the direct quotes and references to the Tanakh (“Old Testament”) there would be very little left in the “New Testament”.

This is not a new doctrine. Paul, Peter, Yeshua and others warned about it many times. They called this doctrine anti-nomianism or lawlessness. Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians warned of a great deception that would overcome “many”, even the elect, called the Mystery of Lawlessness or Iniquity. Both the Tanakh (Old Testament) and the “New Testament” teach that there is only one way to salvation and that is through His Grace. Salvation is a gift that we cannot earn, but obedience is part of the equation. This is the message of Yeshua, James and Paul, but they have all been greatly misunderstood. This is a mystery that I want to explore further.

I believe that this Law versus Grace concept is the greatest question that faces all mankind. The answer determines our eternity. This is why I am writing to you. Both Justification (salvation) and Sanctification (becoming holy as He is Holy or set apart) are necessary to become His Bride. Grace provides access to a path to Salvation and that path is the Torah! The Torah or Tanakh commonly called the “Old Testament” provides His instructions on how to live a holy life. Law and Grace are not opposed to each other, they work together. This is the mystery of Lawlessness.

What is Lawlessness? This is a question that we all should consider very carefully. Here is what Yeshua our Messiah has to say about lawlessness:

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, only those who do what my Father in heaven wants. On that Day, many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord! Didn’t we prophesy in your name? Didn’t we expel demons in your name? Didn’t we perform many miracles in your name?’ Then I will tell them to their faces, ‘I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness!’” Mat. 7:21-23

Wow! I do not want to be one of those “lawless ones” that Yeshua tells to “get away from me, I never knew you.” There are many things to examine in this passage but first, let’s allow Scripture to define lawlessness so we can know what we are talking about. The Scriptures gives us a definition of lawlessness and sin in 1 John. Here are three different translations to consider:

1. *“Everyone who keeps sinning is violating Torah, indeed, sin is violation of Torah.” 1 John 3:4 CJB*
2. *“Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.” 1 John 3:4 NIV*
3. *“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4 KJV*

Other translations use the word "iniquity" instead of "lawlessness." The Greek word for both iniquity and lawlessness in this passage is "anomia" which refers to a transgressor of the Torah as being wicked, unrighteous and thus sinning. Therefore, this passage may be translated ***"Depart from me you who disobey the Torah."***

The word Torah simply means His instructions and precepts, and commonly refers to the first 5 books in the Bible, but all of the Scriptures are His instructions and precepts. We also need to remember when Yeshua (Jesus) spoke these words only the Tanakh or "Old Testament" existed.

Thus lawlessness is a state of living in disobedience to the Torah. Torah is a Hebrew word that is usually translated into English as "law." This leads to many misunderstandings. Again Torah simply means God's precepts and instructions. YHWH gave His people the Torah (Hebrew) or law (English) so we would know what sin is. The Torah is His instructions in how to live a righteous life. If we fail to obey the Torah, we are in sin.

The writings of Paul also make a clear distinction between righteousness and lawlessness.

"For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?" 2 Corinthians 6:14 NKJV

We can see from this passage that righteousness is the opposite of lawlessness. Righteousness involves obedience and lawlessness involves disobedience. It is that simple. Lawlessness is a state of living in disobedience to the Torah.

So who is Yeshua talking about? Who is this group of people in Matthew 7 and Luke 13?

First of all there are a lot of them because the Scripture refers to *"many"* in this group.

Second, they call the Messiah, Lord or Master which would lead one to believe that they are familiar with the Messiah and acknowledge His Kingship. The fact that the Scriptures repeat *"Lord, Lord"* is a way of providing emphasis - these people are emphatic in their calling upon the Messiah as "Lord."

Third, they are prophesying, casting, out demons and doing mighty works "allegedly" in His Name.

Fourth, they are workers of lawlessness - in other words - they are living in disobedience to the Torah.

Finally, Yeshua stated that He never knew them, despite the fact they seem to think that they not only know Him, but have been serving Him.

How could this be? So who is this large group of lawless people who think that they know the Hebrew Messiah and who are prophesying, casting out demons and doing mighty works in His Name? As far as I can see the only group on the face of the earth that fits this description is the Christian "Church."

Who else could fit this description? Please understand that the church of today does not teach the same things that the Messiah in Scripture taught. Just look at the few examples that I have already given and there is much more.

Have we been introduced to an imposter, a false messiah? To put it another way, have we met the anti-Messiah, the lawless one who through the secret power of lawlessness is attempting to take the place of the true Messiah of Israel, who will deceive the very elect, if possible?

For most of us this is almost impossible to comprehend. How could the church be wrong? How could I be deceived?

In Luke, the Messiah gives us another look at this same scenario involving a group of lawless people:

"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open for us, and He will answer and say to you, I do not know you, where you are from, then you will begin to say, We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets. But He will say, I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity

(lawlessness). There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Yitshaq (Isaac) and Yaakob (Jacob) and all the prophets in the kingdom of Elohim, and yourselves thrust out." Luke 13:24-29

This is another very important and powerful message coming straight from the Messiah and it does not seem that it could be presented any clearer. In both passages He states that He does not know the people who are calling to Him and in both instances it is clear that He does not know them because of their state of lawlessness.

This point is reinforced further in 1 John:

"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of Elohim is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning." 1 John 1:3-7

John reaffirms that obedience to the commandments is how a person can be assured that they know the True Messiah. Notice that he is clear that when he speaks of obedience he is not referring to any new commandments but *"an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning."* The commandments that John is referring to are the same ones that Yeshua gave to Adam and Eve and Abraham. The same ones that He wrote on the stones and gave to Moses on Mt. Sinai and the ones that Moses wrote down and read to all the people.

This is the same John that wrote:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1

The Word is the Messiah, Who was and is the Torah and therefore to obey Him is to obey the Torah. We are to walk as He walked - according to the Torah.

Why then is there so much confusion, unbelief and disobedience in Christianity related to the Torah? This is what Paul meant when he spoke of the mystery of iniquity or, to put it another way, the mystery of lawlessness.

"Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness." 2Th 2:1-12

Anyone even slightly familiar with the prophecies in Daniel and Revelation would recognize this lawless one to be the anti-christ, also known as the anti-messiah. People often get the wrong impression of who the lawless one will be because the use of "anti" is a bit misleading.

"Anti" in the Greek means not only, "opposite or in opposition," which is the common understanding, but also **"instead of or in substitution."** So not only does the anti-messiah oppose the true Messiah, but he also wants to replace the Messiah and substitute himself for the

Messiah and be worshiped like Elohim. Therefore where Messiah obeyed the Torah, supported the Torah and taught the Torah (thus the title Rabbi - Teacher), the lawless one, or anti-messiah, promotes disobedience to the Torah through *"the secret power of lawlessness."*

To fully understand Paul's letter to the Thessalonians we need to understand who or what the temple of God is. Theologians usually teach that this passage is about the anti-christ, a person who sets up a literal throne in the new temple in Jerusalem at some future date. While this may be true there is another more personal meaning. Paul teaches that we are His temple

"Don't you know that you people are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" 1Cor. 3:16

This mystery of lawlessness or iniquity can take place within each of us. It is possible for each of us to be deceived. "The secret power of lawlessness" can reside in us!

We need to remember that the devil does not want people to obey the Scripture, because obedience leads to relationship, knowledge and blessing. He does not want people to know YHWH nor does he want them to be blessed. Therefore we know that the devil will condemn YHWH and the Torah.

"He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law..." Daniel 7:25 NKJV.

Notice from the passage in Thessalonians Paul stated that the secret power of lawlessness was already at work. A review of the history of early believers shows that anti-nomianism (against the Torah) was very prevalent. This is something which the Apostles spent much time combating. (Acts 8:9-24). The religious leaders added to and took away from the Torah in many ways with their oral traditions.

This secret power of lawlessness is still very active today. It is found in any doctrine that adds to or takes away from Scripture. This "secret power" says we do not need to obey all of the Word, or that part of the Word is not for today, or that it is just for Jews, or that the Messiah changed His own Words in some way. Remember the very first temptation was a slight change of words to tell Eve she did not really need to obey because God was only withholding something good from her. The devil has not changed his tactics.

Think about this for a minute. If obedience to the Scriptures leads to knowing God, wouldn't the enemy try to get us to disobey in the most cunning ways? What if the devil could even deceive religious leaders into teaching against the Torah by calling it legalism or inventing a second method of salvation by keeping the law that is not found in Scripture? Today's church teaches a very different message than the Messiah of Scripture.

Why did Yeshua (Jesus) spend so much time correcting the Pharisees, who were the religious leaders of the day? Because they had added to and taken away from the Torah (Scriptures). Yeshua corrected the Pharisees, who were teaching doctrines of men as if they were Scripture. **He is still doing this.**

In Matthew 5 Yeshua is simply correcting what the Pharisees had added to the Scriptures. He did not change the Torah in anyway.

The Torah is more than Scripture. It is also His Ketuba or wedding covenant, He is offering to His bride. Those that reject the Torah are rejecting His marriage proposal and will not be His bride. Does this help you understand why the devil is working so hard to deceive? (Exodus 19-24)

There will soon come a day when YHWH will introduce Himself in such a way that there will be no mistaking who He is, but until that time the spirit of lawlessness is working feverishly to lead men toward disobedience and lawlessness - away from knowing the true Elohim. While the Messiah Yeshua taught and lived and was the Torah - Christianity worships and promotes a Jesus, who allegedly changed or abolished the Torah. He has been promoted as a lawless messiah.

I know that statements like this are shocking. But I believe that we are in the last days so it makes perfect sense that the secret power of lawlessness is here, deceiving people in preparation of the appearance of anti-messiah. Many might ask, how could this happen to Believers? Remember we have been warned by the Messiah Himself.

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity [lawlessness] shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Mat. 24:11-12

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Mat. 24:24

Peter warned, "to this day, untaught and unstable teachers are using the writings of Paul to twist the Scriptures" and undermine the Torah. It is important to read on and see where this leads:

"You, then, beloved ones, being forewarned, watch, lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the delusion of lawlessness." 2 Peter 3:17.

The delusion of lawlessness is the false teaching that you do not have to obey the Torah. This is the same delusion referred to by Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12), the same lawlessness referred to by John, (1 John 3:4) and it is the same error referred to by Yeshua. (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 13:24-30).

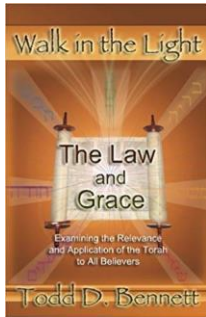
I would encourage all of us to rethink our concept of the Torah (law) **versus** grace. Peter, Paul and Yeshua taught both grace **and** obedience (law):

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Yeshua Hamashiach; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, Be holy, for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:13-16

As Peter demonstrated, the Torah and grace are not in opposition to one another, but rather partners in the Eternal plan of YHWH. Obedience is not legalism. Obedience is the answer to our challenges and a blessing. Only the Torah (Law) shows us how to be holy as He is holy and thus qualified to be His bride. Here is a warning from Yeshua about the doctrines of men:

"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from me. Their worship of me is useless, because they teach man-made rules as if they were doctrines." Mat. 15:8-9

I know what I have written is very alarming. Most today strongly disagree and condemn what I have written as they do the Wellspring message of healing and forgiveness. When I first began to understand the mystery of lawlessness many questions about many passages came to mind. I had to research passage after passage. This was not an easy process and has taken years. In this time I have read over 60 books by at least 30 different authors.



This is why I have attached an electronic copy of a book written by a friend of mine, Todd Bennett, entitled **Law and Grace** as a gift. In this book Todd answers many of the questions raised in the church about obedience and works. If you take time to read it you will find answers to all of your questions.

I pray that you will do this. In my humble opinion there is nothing more important. If, in your study you find that you agree, then you might repent, accept His Ketuba and forgive our teachers as I have.

****Please click on the book cover to download****

God Bless you and may the Holy Spirit be your guide!

Dr. Art Mathias

PS: If you have questions please feel free to call or write to me. Also check out Todd's web site www.shemayisrael.net. He has written several other books.

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