

Assembly of Eloah

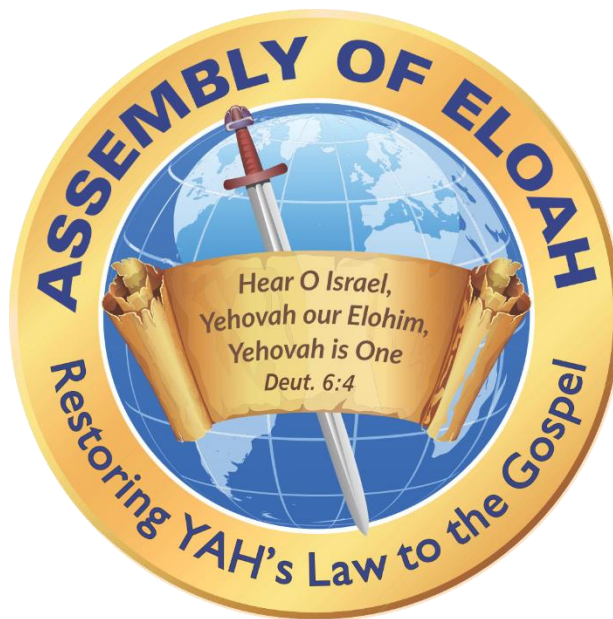
This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent -- Jesus Christ. Jn. 17:3

Faith

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David Treat

Many people speak of faith and how we are to live by our faith. What do they mean when they say this?
This study examines the subject of faith and what it means to live by faith.



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Faith

And faith is neither the submission of the reason, nor is it the acceptance, simply and absolutely upon testimony, of what reason cannot reach. Faith is: the being able to cleave to a power of goodness appealing to our higher and real self, not to our lower and apparent self. [Matthew Arnold, "Literature & Dogma," 1873]

Faith is the hope in things unseen.

Heb. 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Faith is the assurance or the guarantee of what it is we all hope for and the strong persuasion or belief in the things not seen: the spiritual realm. What does it mean to really have faith? How do we exercise faith and what is its purpose? This study explores the subject of faith and hopefully, when all is said and done, the reader will have a better understanding of the subject.

Simply put, faith is believing in something without having complete evidence. When we truly believe something, we have faith in that thing. Belief: To hold dear; to esteem or trust. If I believe what someone tells me, I have faith that the person is dealing with me truthfully. Of course, it may turn out to be misguided faith, if that person is not trustworthy or worthy of the faith placed in him / her.

We are required by our Father to be trustworthy.

Lev. 19:11-12 ESV "You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another. (12) You shall not swear by my name

falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am Y^ehovah (the LORD).

Exo. 20:16 ESV "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

People who do these things can't be trusted and we shouldn't put any faith in them at all. We aren't to conduct ourselves in this manner. The entire fabric of society breaks down when there is no guarantee that someone is telling the truth. There can be no true justice if people will lie under oath. The idea of justice depends on having at least two honest witnesses.

Deut. 19:15-19 ESV "A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. (16) If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing, (17) then both parties to the dispute shall appear before Y^ehovah (the LORD), before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. (18) The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, (19) then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

It's not difficult to see how critical truth and integrity is to the order of society.

Y^ehovah is trustworthy and speaks the truth.

2Sam. 7:28 ESV And now, O Y^ehovah (LORD) GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant.

Prov. 30:5-6 ESV Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. (6) Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.

John 17:17 ESV Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

Y^ehovah's word is truth. He doesn't lie.

Titus 1:1-3 ESV Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, (2) in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began (3) and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

In the KJV, it says in verse 2, "God, who **cannot** lie". Our Father is incapable of sin and therefore cannot lie or deal falsely with us. It is for this reason that we are able to have complete faith in Him and in His word.

Of course, we have to be careful because His word has been corrupted by those that would mislead us and have us believe a lie. A student of scripture must be willing to search a matter out in many different sources in order to determine if something is really true.

We have to be like the Bereans, as Paul stated.

Acts 17:11 ESV Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Faith is belief and in order to have any faith in another being, that being must be

worthy of that faith. Who could possibly be more deserving than a being that is incapable of lying? Faith in Y^ehovah is never misguided.

Faith of the Patriarchs

It is difficult for anyone to have a conversation about faith and not mention the faith of the patriarchs. When Y^ehovah spoke to them through the angels, they believed. Abram was childless in old age but he had faith in the promises made to him by Y^ehovah.

Gen. 15:2-6 ESV But Abram said, "O Y^ehovah (LORD) GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" (3) And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." (4) And behold, the word of Y^ehovah (the LORD) came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." (5) And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." (6) And he believed Y^ehovah (the LORD), and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Abraham believed Y^ehovah and it was counted to him as righteousness. Abraham was considered righteous because he **believed** God. Righteousness is tied directly to our belief, which is where faith begins.

The story of Abraham is well known in scripture. Y^ehovah told Abraham to take his long awaited heir up on the mountain and sacrifice him (Gen. 22:1-18). The Book of Jasher expounds on the story.

Refer to The Book of Jasher 22:46 – 23:75.

Abraham did what he was told to do. All the while having faith in the promise made to him that he would have an heir. He had to have known that Y^ehovah would either save Isaac, resurrect Isaac or provide another heir. Either way, he had faith in the promise.

Based on what we read in the Book of Jasher, it appears that Isaac had a good deal of faith as well. It appears that he was willing to **be** that sacrifice.

King David speaks of his belief in the word of Y^ehovah.

Psa. 116:6-11 ESV Y^ehovah (The LORD) preserves the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me. (7) Return, O my soul, to your rest; for Y^ehovah (the LORD) has dealt bountifully with you. (8) For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling; (9) I will walk before Y^ehovah (the LORD) in the land of the living. (10) I believed, even when I spoke: "I am greatly afflicted"; (11) I said in my alarm, "All mankind are liars."

He believed that he would be delivered even when he was being sorely afflicted. This is a conviction that comes from seeing Y^ehovah's word come true. This was David's faith.

When Moses went into Egypt from Midian, he spoke the words of Y^ehovah and the children of Israel believed him.

Exo. 4:31 ESV And the people **believed**; and when they heard that Y^ehovah (the LORD) had

visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.

Exo. 14:31 ESV Israel saw the great power that Y^ehovah (the LORD) used against the Egyptians, so the people feared Y^ehovah (the LORD), and they believed in Y^ehovah (the LORD) and in his servant Moses.

Their faith obviously faded as they went through the trials of coming out of Egypt but initially they did have faith.

The city of Nineveh was saved as a result of the people's faith.

Jonah 3:5-10 ESV And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. (6) The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. (7) And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, (8) but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. (9) Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish." (10) When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

They believed Y^ehovah and he relented of the destruction with which He was going to destroy them. Unfortunately their faith didn't last and less than 100 years later, they were destroyed as a result of their wickedness. It took only two generations

for Nineveh to forget Y^ehovah and what he had done.

Nahum 3:5-7 ESV Behold, I am against you, declares Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdoms at your shame. (6) I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. (7) And all who look at you will shrink from you and say, "Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her?" Where shall I seek comforters for you?

Y^ehovah doesn't tolerate those who break faith with Him forever. There is a time of judgment coming when those that have broken faith will pay for their lack of faith.

The patriarchs had faith and they stayed loyal to Y^ehovah throughout their lives. Even David who was a violent and bloody man who committed many sins that really make us pause and wonder how he was ever considered the apple of Y^ehovah's eye. He was so bloody in fact that he wasn't allowed to build the temple but his son Solomon was chosen to build it instead.

The patriarchs and prophets of scripture believed Y^ehovah and knew His word was true. Through continual obedience, they learned to trust and believe their creator. When He speaks, it comes to pass.

Deut. 18:21-22 ESV And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that Y^ehovah (the LORD) has not spoken?'— (22) when a prophet speaks in the name of Y^ehovah (the LORD), if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that Y^ehovah (the LORD) has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

Jos. 23:14 ESV "And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good things that Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed.

Eze. 24:14 ESV I am Y^ehovah (the LORD). I have spoken; it shall come to pass; I will do it. I will not go back; I will not spare; I will not relent; according to your ways and your deeds you will be judged, declares Y^ehovah (the LORD) GOD."

Jas. 4:12-17 ESV There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor? (13) Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"— (14) yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. (15) Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." (16) As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. (17) So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Only The One True God can make anything come to pass. We speak presumptuously, if we say that we are definitely going to do anything. It is only by His will that we even wake up in the morning!

Israel forgot their God even though He warned them against forgetting. In fact, He told them clearly how not to forget.

Deut. 4:9-10 ESV "Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make

them known to your children and your children's children— (10) how on the day that you stood before Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God at Horeb, Y^ehovah (the LORD) said to me, 'Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.'

Deut. 4:23-40 ESV Take care, lest you forget the covenant of Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God, which he made with you, and make a carved image, the form of anything that Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God has forbidden you. (24) For Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. (25) "When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God, so as to provoke him to anger, (26) I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. (27) And Y^ehovah (the LORD) will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where Y^ehovah (the LORD) will drive you. (28) And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. (29) But from there you will seek Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. (30) When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God and obey his voice. (31) For Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them. (32) "For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether such a great thing as this has ever happened or was ever heard of. (33) Did any people ever hear the voice of a god speaking out of the midst of

the fire, as you have heard, and still live? (34) Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great deeds of terror, all of which Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? (35) To you it was shown, that you might know that Y^ehovah (the LORD) is God; there is no other besides him. (36) Out of heaven he let you hear his voice, that he might discipline you. And on earth he let you see his great fire, and you heard his words out of the midst of the fire. (37) And because he loved your fathers and chose their offspring after them and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power, (38) driving out before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is this day, (39) know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that Y^ehovah (the LORD) is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. (40) Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land that Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God is giving you for all time."

There are stiff penalties for forgetting Y^ehovah and His laws and statutes. We are admonished to keep them before our eyes continually and to do them. We are to teach them to our children and meditate on them always. We are to keep His Sabbaths, New Moons and Feasts, as commanded. Nowhere in scripture is any man given the authority to change them. If we add to His word, we become liars, as we read above.

Through these activities, we train ourselves in obedience to our Father. It is reckoned as faithfulness.

Eze. 18:5-9 ESV "If a man is righteous and does what is just and right— (6) if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman in her time of menstrual impurity, (7) does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, (8) does not lend at interest or take any profit, withholds his hand from injustice, executes true justice between man and man, (9) walks in my statutes, and keeps my rules by acting faithfully—he is righteous; he shall surely live, declares Y^ehovah (the LORD) GOD.

Our obedience in living by His rules is equal to faith. Faith is believing what our Father says and obeying His rules as a result of that belief.

Psa. 25:15 ESV My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

Psa. 119:5-6 ESV Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! (6) Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.

The patriarchs of the Old Testament had this kind of faith and we see the same faith discussed in the New Testament. The expectation of obedience hasn't changed nor will it.

Mat. 6:24-34 ESV "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. (25) "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? (26) Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father

feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (27) And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? (28) And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, (29) yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (30) But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? (31) Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' (32) For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. (33) But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (34) "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Rom. 1:1-6 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, (2) which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, (3) concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh (4) and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, (5) through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, (6) including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. (See also Rom. 3:20-31)

We shouldn't despair when it comes to this life. If presented with a choice, we must always choose to do the will of our Father. We must put obedience to Him above whatever we may be concerned with. This is the faith we are called to have. We put our cares on Him and have faith that He will do what He says He will do.

1Pet. 5:6-7 ESV Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, (7) casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Psa. 55:22 ESV Cast your burden on Y^ehovah (the LORD), and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

We first must believe that He is the One True God. We then must believe that His word is true and that He will keep His promises. Then we must act on that belief by doing what He would have us do.

Jesus chastised the disciples for their lack of faith.

Mat. 8:23-27 And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. (24) And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. (25) And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." (26) And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. (27) And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

Mat. 14:23-32 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, (24) but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. (25) And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. (26) But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. (27) But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." (28) And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." (29) He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the

boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. (30) But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." (31) Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (32) And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. (See also Luke 12:16-59)

Mat. 21:18-22 In the morning, as he was returning to the city, he became hungry. (19) And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. (20) When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" (21) And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen. (22) And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."

Mark 11:20-25 As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. (21) And Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." (22) And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. (23) Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. (24) Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. (25) And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

Faith or Works?

Does Faith replace obedience? Are those that claim their salvation as a result of their law-keeping better than those who claim to receive salvation through faith

with no requirement of law-keeping? The answer is that neither of them are correct!

Rom. 4:1-25 What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? (2) For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. (3) For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." (4) Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. (5) And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, (6) just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: (7) "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; (8) blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." (9) Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. (10) How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. (11) He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, (12) and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. (13) For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. (14) For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. (15) For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. (16) That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (17) as it is written, "I have made you the father of many

nations"—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. (18) In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." (19) He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. (20) No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, (21) fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. (22) That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." (23) But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, (24) but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, (25) who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Jas. 2:1-26 ESV My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. (2) For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, (3) and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," (4) have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? (5) Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? (6) But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? (7) Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called? (8) If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. (9) But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (10) For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become

accountable for all of it. (11) For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. (12) So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. (13) For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (14) What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? (15) If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, (16) and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? (17) So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (18) But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (19) You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! (20) Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? (21) Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? (22) You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; (23) and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. (24) You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. (25) And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? (26) For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

Faith and "works" are inextricably intertwined with one another. Salvation doesn't come to those who only have one of the two. If a person has faith, which is, quite simply, **believing** that God **is** and that Y^ehovah is the One True God that must be obeyed but has no works or

actions of obedience, that person won't receive the salvation he /she so desperately seek.

On the other hand, if one keeps the letter of the law but has no faith that Jesus was the son of the One True God and that he gave himself up to become the propitiation for all sins, then it is for naught. The Sadducees and the Pharisees claimed that **their** law-keeping justified them. This is what much of what Paul was trying to address and this is what James was also addressing. Those of the circumcision who added all of their traditions to the laws of Y^ehovah were a real problem for the early church.

The Judaics of those days adhered to a "religion" that was added to the lawful system laid out in the Torah by Y^ehovah. They added their own traditions and made it a burden on the people.

Mat. 15:1-20 ESV Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, (2) "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." (3) He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? (4) For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' (5) But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, "What you would have gained from me is given to God," (6) he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. (7) You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: (8) "'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; (9) in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" (10) And he called the people to him and

said to them, "Hear and understand: (11) it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person." (12) Then the disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" (13) He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. (14) Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit." (15) But Peter said to him, "Explain the parable to us." (16) And he said, "Are you also still without understanding? (17) Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? (18) But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. (19) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. (20) These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone."

Faith **and** works are required for salvation. We are required to **believe** Y^ehovah of Hosts and **obey!** In Romans 5-8, the Apostle Paul discusses this.

Rom. 5:12-13 ESV Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— (13) for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.

Rom. 5:18-19 ESV Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. (19) For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's **obedience** the many will be made righteous.

Doing what Y^ehovah tells us to do is accounted to us as righteousness, just as it was for Abraham. It is action that is spurred by faith.

Rom. 6:1-2 ESV What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? (2) By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

Rom. 6:14-17 ESV For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. (15) What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! (16) Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to **righteousness**? (17) But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the **heart** to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,

This obedience to the laws of Y^ehovah leads to righteousness. It is through faith that this obedience comes. If we have no faith (meaning we don't believe God), then what purpose would we have for law-keeping? We would have none!

Rom. 7:12-25 ESV So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. (13) Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. (14) For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. (15) For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. (16) Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. (17) So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. (18) For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. (19) For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. (20) Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. (21) So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at

hand. (22) For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, (23) but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. (24) Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? (25) Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Paul was very clear that Y^ehovah's law was not eliminated and replaced by grace. Quite the contrary, the law and the requirements therein are righteous. The weakness of the flesh weakened the law as it could not save those that sinned. The law defines what sin is but it is the grace of Y^ehovah through the sacrifice of Christ that saves us.

Rom. 8:1-9 ESV There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. (3) For God has done what the law, **weakened by the flesh**, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, (4) in order that the **righteous requirement of the law** might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (5) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. (6) For to **set the mind on the flesh is death**, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. (7) For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, **for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.** (8) Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (9) You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

We can't please our creator if we are in the flesh. If we have a spiritual mind, we're going to submit to what? To the laws of The One True God!

We are supposed to be **living** our faith! What does this mean? It means that we are to be doing what Y^ehovah says to do! We are to be **practicing the law-keeping** that He requires.

Hab. 2:2-4 ESV And Y^ehovah (the LORD) answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. (3) For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay. (4) "Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.

Our hope is in the resurrection from the dead. If Jesus wasn't resurrected from the dead, as Y^ehovah said, all would be in vain and for naught.

1Cor. 15:12-19 ESV Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? (13) But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. (14) And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. (15) We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. (16) For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. (17) And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. (18) Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (19) If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

As already stated many times in this study, we see in this passage that our belief is our faith. We **believe** our God and therefore we have faith. We **believe** that He raised Jesus from the dead because we have faith that He does what He says He will do.

If we have faith or believe that Jesus is the Messiah and the only begotten son of Y^ehovah, then we should also believe what he said regarding his resurrection.

Mat. 12:39-40 ESV But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. (40) For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The bottom line, brethren, is that we must believe God. If we believe our Father, then we must believe His son.

John 14:10-24 ESV Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. (11) Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. (12) "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. (13) Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (14) If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. (15) "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (16) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, (17) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. (18) "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

(19) Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. (20) In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. (21) Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." (22) Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" (23) Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. (24) Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

Conclusion

Brethren, as we have seen in scripture, there is an unbreakable connection between faith and works. These two things can't be separated. Our belief or faith in our Father in heaven lead us to obey what He commands. We are commanded to keep His laws. This is what He requires of those who love Him.

1Jn 5:2-3 ESV By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. (3) For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

2Jn 1:6 ESV And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

Rev. 12:17 ESV Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

Rev. 14:12-16 ESV Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. (13) And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" (14) Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. (15) And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." (16) So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.

2Peter 3:14-18 ESV Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. (15) And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, (16) as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. (17) You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. (18) But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

We are Y^ehovah's children, if we keep His commandments! These are our works and this is our duty!

Luke 18:7-8 ESV And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? (8) I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Ecc. 12:13-14 ESV The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. (14) For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

If we grow in the grace and knowledge of our lord Jesus, the Messiah, who was obedient to the death, then the answer to the question will be an exuberant YES!

Don't fall prey to the great lie perpetuated by the vast majority of the religious organizations in the world today. Don't begin to believe that faith is separate from works. As we have seen, this is absolutely not the case! It is also not the case that we can be saved through our works! It is only through faith **with** works that we are saved.

Many twist Paul's words in an attempt to prove their lies. Live your faith, brethren, and keep your eyes on the prize so your crown remains secure.