

Hold On To Torah

It Will Keep and Protect You Through Life

Proverbs 29:18—A Study Outline

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Steps In a Believer's Walk

In this study, we will examine the spiritual stages of growth and development that a believer goes through while crossing the wilderness of life en route to our spiritual promised land—the kingdom of Elohim. We will see how Torah (YHVH's instructions in righteousness) plays a pivotal role that keeps us on the straight and narrow path that will eventually bring us safely to our spiritual destination. In view will be the oft-quoted verse from Proverbs 29:18 which says, “Where there is no vision [literally, prophetic revelation], the people perish [or cast off restraint, become lawless, unloosened, and unbridled], but he that keeps [hedge about, guards, protects] the Torah, happy is he.” Many are familiar with the first part of this verse, but not the second part, where we see that Torah plays a vital role in guiding us to our spiritual or prophetic and eternal destiny.

Not only do we see Elohim directing his people into the path of Torah righteousness, but he is continually exposing them to the greater message of the everlasting gospel message (Rev 14:6), which involves salvation through faith in the shed blood of Yeshua, the Lamb of Elohim at the cross. What's more, Yeshua, the Word of YHVH incarnate (in flesh form, John 1:1–4, 14), the Living Torah, was the one who, as the arm of YHVH (Isa 53:1), delivered Israel from Egypt, and who, as the Angel (Messenger) of YHVH, led them in the pillar of fire, who spoke to them from Mount Sinai and gave them the Torah, who was the Rock that gave them water, and who was the bread of life to them. Yeshua himself and the apostolic writers make these connections between Yeshua and the deity-figure who was with the Israelites throughout their tenure in the wilderness (John 8:58 cp Exod 3:14; John 6:32–58; Acts 7:35–39; 1 Cor 10:4,9).

As you read this study, note how little-by-little, like a parent training his child, Elohim is training his people to walk in his Torah commandments, all the while revealing to them the truth of the redemptive work of Yeshua. Please note that obedience to the Torah and belief in Yeshua go hand-in-hand. The two are indivisible. One cannot believe in, love, and even know Yeshua without obeying his commands (John 14:15; 1 John 2:3–6). Belief in Yeshua and walking in the ways of Yeshua are two sides of the same coin.

Interestingly, this message of the gospel (walking in Torah, the Written Word of Elohim, and having faith in Yeshua, the Living Torah/Word of Elohim) has never changed, for the last book of the Bible still identifies the end-time saints of Elohim as keeping the commandments of Elohim and having the testimony or faith of Yeshua (Rev 12:17; 14:12).

One's Pre-Redemption (pre-Salvation) State

- 1— **Slavery to Sin:** Israel, while in Egypt, was in bondage, slavery, servitude to the world, flesh and the devil. The word *Egypt* (*Mitzraim*) is *Strong's* H4714 and according to *Strong's Concordance* and *Gesenius' Lexicon* is related to H4693 (*matzowr*, another name for *Mitzraim*) and means “something hemming in, distress, besieged, bulwark, defense.” *Matzowr* is from H6696 (*tzur*) meaning “to cramp, confine, beset, besiege, bind up, enclose, lay siege.” Do these words describe the state of one's pre-redemption state? What is the result of this upon one emotionally? (Despair?...)
- 2— **Despair:** Israel cried out in anguish from under the burden of their bondage in Egypt. YHVH heard the cry of their hearts and stretched out his strong arm and delivered them with a mighty hand. Their world shook and literally fell apart as he dislodged them from those things that confined them as enslaved captives in Egypt. The world around them was judged and Israel experienced some of these judgments, as well, (to get

their attention, to shake them up and to get them looking heavenward) though YHVH graciously spared them from those judgments that would destroy them. Did YHVH have to do a similar work in your life to dislodge you from a life of sin and idolatry? Does he still have to do this from time to time in our spiritual walk to move us to a higher level of spiritual maturity and move us into a greater capacity of service in his kingdom?

Redemption

3— **Redemption/Salvation:** YHVH saved Israel unconditionally. They did nothing to deserve redemption other than by faith to sacrifice the lamb and place its blood on their doors to save them from the death angel (which represents death, which is the penalty for man's sin/breaking Elohim's laws according to Ezek 18:4; Rom 6:23; 1 John 3:4). Salvation is simply a matter of believing in the Lamb of YHVH and applying his shed blood to the spiritual door posts and lintels of our actions and thoughts (Matt 5:19; Eph 2:8–9).

Sanctification and Journey to the Promised Land

4— **Sanctification/Set Apartness:** YHVH separated the Israelites from the Egyptians during the outpouring of the plagues, and then he physically brought Israel out of Egypt. This is the pattern of what YHVH does for us spiritually. At the point of one's redemption or salvation from one's past life of sin, one often has to leave sinful lifestyles and relationships, sometimes even family, friends, or jobs and maybe even physical localities to remove oneself from the ties of the past that bound one in servitude to the rudiments of the world. Did this happen to you? Is YHVH still trying to dislodge you from some hindrances, entanglements and idols that remain from your past life in spiritual Egypt?

5— **Putting Sin Out of One's Life:** YHVH then commanded Israel to put leaven (a spiritual symbol for sin) out of their dwelling places for seven days before celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzot*). Likewise, when we leave our spiritual Egypt we must put the sin out of our lives (our spiritual houses). We cannot live a redeemed life and expect to hang on to the very sins that kept us enslaved to the world, the flesh and the devil and in rebellion against the righteous ways of Elohim.

6— **The Spiritual Warfare Phase:** Egypt, Pharaoh and the world system endeavored to draw Israel back in to it either through tempting allurements or by coercive force (e.g., recall the wicked one in the Parable of the Sower in Matt 13:18–23). How many new believers in Yeshua have you seen fall away shortly after being redeemed? Perhaps it almost happened to you, or did happen. This is a very vulnerable time for new believers and the enemies of YHVH know this and will try to capitalize on it.

7— **Death to the Old Man and Resurrection to New Life in Torah/Yeshua:** Israel crossed (was immersed or baptized in) the Red Sea. In 1 Corinthians 10:2, Paul states that the Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the Red Sea, even as a new believer is immersed for the remission of sins. This is one of the first acts of obedience a new believer is required to do upon receiving salvation (Acts 2:37–38; Rom 6:3–6).

8— **Our First Love or "Spiritual Honeymoon":** When Israel made it safely to the other side of the Red Sea and their enemies lay dead and defeated at the bottom of the sea, it was a time of great rejoicing and triumph. Joy and love for YHVH burst forth from the Israelites as Miriam led the women in a song of victory (Exod 15:19–21). It was at this point that Israel was truly free from Egypt resulting in expressions of joy. Israel revealed in the "first love" of its relationship with YHVH. What was it like when you were first saved? Was the Messiah the love of your life? Never lose your first love for Yeshua. (Read the Song of Solomon and Rev 2:4.)

9— **The Walk of Righteousness:** Israel was out of Egypt now and YHVH needed to instruct Israel on what to do next. It was time to receive her marching orders—YHVH's instructions in righteousness (i.e., the Torah). YHVH says, "Obey me and receive life and health. Start by keeping Shabbat." The Sabbath is often one of the first commandments that new converts to the Messianic Israel faith start keeping. How about you?

10— **Overcoming and Perseverance:** Now the walking-it-out-time begins. Israel had to overcome doubt, unbelief and fear, the struggles for food and water, and battles against all her enemies. "The Wilderness Experience" walk of faith had begun. It was time to start learning to trust and obey. It was time for the spiritual children to grow up and become mature adult believers and sons of the King.

YHVH Instills the Concept of Torah Into the Day-to-Day Lives of the Israelites

Study the **bolded** phrases to see how they relate to the Torah (YHVH's instructions, teachings, or precepts in righteousness), and how YHVH was using these experiences to instill Torah-obedience into the Children of Israel.

- ☞ **Exodus 13:21**, “And YHVH went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.” (See Ps 119:105.)
- ☞ **Exodus 14:20**, “And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.” (Study 1 Cor 1:18; 2:14; Matt 10:16–25 to see how spiritual light is light to the righteous and darkness/foolishness to the wicked.)
- ☞ **Exodus 15:25–26**, “And he cried unto YHVH; and YHVH showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a **statute and an ordinance**, and there he proved them, and said, ‘If you will diligently hearken to the **voice of YHVH** your Elohim, and will **do that which is right** in his sight, and will give ear to his **commandments**, and keep all his **statutes**, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am YHVH that heals you.’”
- ☞ **Exodus 15:27**, “And they came to Elim, where were **twelve wells of water**, and **seventy palm trees**, and they encamped there by **the waters**.” Water in Scripture represents the Torah-Word of Elohim (Deut 32:2; Eph 5:26). Twelve wells represents 12 leaders (tribes, apostles) to proclaim the good news message of salvation and to teach YHVH's Torah to show people how to walk in righteousness after being redeemed from enslavement to sin. The 70 palms represent the elders that ruled Israel (later called the Sanhedrin) who made rulings on Torah (see Exod 18:20–26; Deut 17:8–13). Yeshua appointed 12 disciples (who later became the 12 apostles) and then 70 more disciples whose mission it was to wash Israel with the message of the gospel and give refreshment to those who were hot and weary spiritually (Luke 10:1,17).
- ☞ **Exodus 16:4**, “Then said YHVH unto Moses, ‘Behold, **I will rain bread from heaven for you**; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in **my Torah-law**, or not.’” Bread from heaven symbolizes the Word of Elohim and points to Yeshua the Word of Elohim made flesh and the spiritual bread of life (John 1:1–2,14; 6:25–58).
- ☞ **Exodus 16:23**, “And he said unto them, ‘This is that which YHVH has said, ‘Tomorrow is the rest of the set-apart **Sabbath** unto YHVH. Bake that which you will bake today, and boil that you will boil; and that which remains over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.’”
- ☞ **Exodus 16:28–30**, “And YHVH said unto Moses, ‘How long refuse you to keep **my commandments and my laws**? See, for that YHVH has given you **the Sabbath**, therefore he gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on **the seventh day**.’”
- ☞ **Exodus 17:6**, “Behold, I will stand before you there **upon the rock in Horeb**; and you shall smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.’ And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.” Who and what is that rock? It all points to the Torah-Word of Elohim, both the Written Torah and Yeshua, the Living Torah. (See Isa 8:14; Matt 7:24–27; 1 Cor 10:4)
- ☞ **Exodus 17:12**, “But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took **a stone, and put it under him**, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.” What does the stone represent? (See Deut 32:15; Pss 62:2; 95:1.)

Additional Torah Nuggets

☞ Satan Attacks New Believers

Exodus 14:2–3, “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, **over against** [or *before, ArtScroll Chumash*] Baalzephon: before it shall you encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ‘They are entangled in the land, the wilderness has shut them in.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, that he shall follow after them, and I will be honored upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host that the Egyptians may know that I am YHVH.’ And they did so.”

The *ArtScroll Chumash* says that Israel after wandering in the desert for three days began to retrace its steps and fell to worshipping Baal Zephon (i.e., Baal of the winter or cold [*Strong's* H1189; from *Strong's* H6828, *tzaphon* meaning “hidden, north, gloomy, or unknown”]) and gave into fear and lost resolve to move forward. Satan (the adversary) capitalized on their weakness—namely, fear (faithlessness), indecision, and confusion (they lost their direction as they took their eyes off of YHVH/Torah)—and sent Pharaoh to destroy them in their time of weakness. YHVH permitted this to occur as an enticement to Pharaoh to attack a seemingly weakened Israel so that YHVH might glorify his name by destroying Israel’s enemies.

☞ **New Believers Are Vulnerable**

Exodus 14:8 says “...and the children of Israel went out with an high hand.” Israel exited Egypt triumphantly. The Jewish sages teach that the expression “an high hand” means that they went out proudly lifting high the banners of their respective tribes. This is reminiscent of The Parable of the Sower (Matt 13:3–9, 18–23) where the one “that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that hears the word, and anon with joy receives it, yet has he is not root in himself, but endures for a while, for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, by and by he is offended.” Israel, like many new converts, fell prey to this same syndrome. New converts are very vulnerable to discouragement, and believer who are mature in their faith must look out for their younger and weaker spiritual brethren.

☞ **The Bitter Waters and the Tree of Life**

Exodus 15:25–26, “And he cried unto YHVH; and YHVH showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them and said, ‘If you will diligently hearken to the voice of YHVH your Elohim, and will do that which is right in his sight, and will give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am YHVH who heals you.’” The tree that Moses cast into the bitter waters symbolizes the tree of life, or the Torah-Word of Elohim. The Jewish rabbis teach that wisdom is synonymous with the Torah of YHVH and that Torah is referred to when Solomon speaks of wisdom in Proverbs 3:13–18. Yeshua is the Torah-Word made flesh (John 1:1–2, 14). The tree that Moses cast into the bitter waters prophetically points to the cross on which Yeshua was crucified whereby the bitter waters of sin and death were turned into waters of healing and life for the faith-filled believer. *Water* represents the word of Elohim that washes, refreshes, cleans, purifies and nourishes helping the tree to produce much fruit (Deut 32:3; Eph 5:26; Heb 10:22; Tit 3:5; Ps 1:3). Marah was one of the ten instances where YHVH tested Israel to see if they would trust him and obey him by following his Torah-instructions.

☞ **YHVH Continues to Test the Israelites**

YHVH first tested the Israelites in the area of drink (water), and now in the area of bread (food). YHVH tested Israel to see if the need for human sustenance would stand in the way of their faithful obedience to his Word/Torah or not. Would they lose faith when faced with a little hunger and thirst? Is our faith and obedience to his Word only a fair-weather faith and obedience? YHVH will test us to see what the true metal of our heart and character is. Paul speaks of this struggle between the flesh man and the spirit man that Believers must face (Rom 7:14–25). Yeshua taught that the spirit is willing, but that the flesh is weak (Matt 26:41). When one comes to Yeshua one must crucify the ungodly passions of the flesh and allow the Spirit of life in Yeshua to dominate (Rom 6:3–6; 8:1–2; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20).

☞ **Bread From Heaven and the Sabbath**

Exodus 16:4 speaks of “bread [*lechem*] from heaven” raining down upon the Israelites. Through the manna, YHVH was teaching man not to confuse the profane (secular) with the set-apart (holy or *kadosh*) times of YHVH. He gave man six days for the pursuit of physical bread and one day for the pursuit of spiritual bread (study of YHVH’s Word and service to him). By limiting manna to a one-day supply (Exod 16:4–21), YHVH showed Israel that he was the Provider at all times and that they would need to trust him one day at a time. With the double portion of manna on Friday, he was showing them that observance of Shabbat would never be an impediment to one’s livelihood. YHVH provided vast quantities of manna, but he expected them to

go out and to gather it. Though blessings from heaven may rain down upon us, we must exercise volition and expend effort to go out and procure those blessings. Sluggards and the lazy will die of hunger. All of YHVH's blessings require effort (not earned by works; there is a difference) on our part to receive them. This is the "faith without works is dead" concept that the Apostle James teaches about (Jas 2:14–26). Maintaining salvation requires fruits of righteousness or works. On a daily basis, we have to study YHVH's Word and communicate with him through prayer in order to have a vital, life-giving, power-packed, relationship with our Heavenly Father. Yeshua commands his followers to ask, seek and to knock; to not only believe, but to hear and to do; to be overcomers. Yeshua will reward men according to their works (Matt 5:19; 25:14–30, The Parable of the Talents). He rewards profitability and action, not slothfulness and inactivity.

☞ **Water From the Rock**

Exodus 17:6–7, "Behold, I will stand before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted YHVH, saying, 'Is YHVH among us, or not?'" In Numbers 20:24, we read, "Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because you **rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.**" The word *Masah* means "temptation"; the word *Meribah* means "strife"; and *Horeb* means "desert" and is another name for Sinai. Again we see a spiritual picture of YHVH's people being washed by the water of the Word of Elohim. Ephesians 5:25–27 says, "... Messiah also loved the assembly [of redeemed believers] and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word that he might present it to himself a glorious assembly not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be set apart and without blemish."

☞ **Battle With Amalek (Satan)**

Exodus 17:11–12 says, "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."

As long as Israel looked heavenward, they won the battle. Similarly, as long as our arms lifted heavenward in praise, surrender, dependence upon our Heavenly Father (like a small child with outstretched arms toward his parent wanting something). Moses' resting on a stone is a picture of the wise man building his house on the Rock of Torah or Yeshua, the Living Torah, who is the Rock of our salvation or redemption (Deut 32:15; 2 Sam 22:3,47; Pss 18:2,46; 62:2,6,7; 89:26; 95:1; Isa 17:10; Matt. 7:24–27).

The name *Amalek* is a curious one. It is a play on several Hebrew words of similar spelling and pronunciation. In the Tanakh, there are many word-plays that express deeper or hidden spiritual meanings or concepts that are unearthed only as one digs into the Hebrew. In this case, let's look at some homonym-type words (i.e., words that are pronounced the same, but which are spelled differently). *Amalek* is spelled עמלק (*ayin-mem-lamed-quf*). This is pronounced almost identically to the word phrase: I am king spelled אמלך (*aleph-mem-lamed-chaf sofit*). *Melek* is the generic Hebrew word for king. The pagan deity *Moloch* derives from this word. Another Hebrew word of similar spelling and pronunciation is *malak* meaning "messenger, ambassador or angel" and in numerous instances in the Torah refers to the Word of YHVH, which later was revealed in the Person of Yeshua the Messiah. It is spelled מלאך (*mem-lamed-aleph-chaf sofit*). Now put all these concepts together. Amalek as a type of the devil, the adversary of the people of YHVH who stood in the way to resist the people of YHVH from entering into their promised inheritance. How does Satan fulfill this role? He is the prince of this world, comes as an angel of light, and he hinders, kills, steals and destroys.

How did Moses, who is a type of Messiah Yeshua, defeat the Amalekites? When Moses was tired he sat on a rock (Exod 17:12). Who is the Rock upon which we are to build our spiritual house? Who is the Chief Cornerstone of our spiritual building? (Read Matt 7:24; Eph 2:20.) Spiritually we are to be sitting on Yeshua. Where is Yeshua now seated? (Read Heb 1:3.) Spiritually, where are the redeemed of Yeshua seated? (Read Eph 2:6.) Because Yeshua defeated Satan at the cross (read and believe Gen 3:15; Col 2:15; Rom 8:31,37; 16:20

[*bruise* means “crush”]; Luke 9:1 and 10:19; 1 John 4:4; Jas 4:7), if we are on, in and with Yeshua do we share in that same victory?

As the Israelites had victory over the Amalekites because Moses was sitting on a rock with his hands lifted in praise and surrender to YHVH, likewise when we stand on Yeshua the Rock of our salvation (Ps 95:1; 1 Cor 10:4; Rom 9:33) with hands similarly lifted in praise and surrender, we too can defeat our spiritual enemies!

Furthermore, Scripture says that Aaron and Hur helped to support the hands of Moses (Exod 17:12). We don't know if they supported just his hands or both his arms and his hands, but the Hebrew word is the word *yad* meaning hands and not arms. It is conceivable that Moses resembled Yeshua on the cross with his arms stretched out. If this is so, then this would be another picture of Yeshua, of whom Moses was a prophetic precursor (Deut 18:15–18). Yeshua while on the cross defeated the devil (of whom the Amalakites are a symbol), and through Yeshua's death on the cross the redeemed have victory over the devil, as well as death (Col 2:15; 1 John 3:8; Gen 3:15; Heb 2:14; 1 Cor 15:56–57; Rom 8:37).

Do you believe YHVH's Word on this? If so, then go out and kick the devil in the name of Yeshua and do not allow him to steal your spiritual inheritance by keeping you from entering your spiritual Promised Land!

Conclusion

As we journey through the spiritual wilderness called life en route to our spiritual Promised Land—the kingdom of Elohim—we must keep several things in mind. With Egypt behind us and the Promised Land before us, on our journey we will encounter many hindrances, attacks, tests and trials. Will they make or break us? Will we die in fear and faithlessness in the wilderness, or will we be overcomers to push forward victoriously to possess our inheritance? The Promised Land is the spiritual vision before us. To stay on track, we must keep our focus on Yeshua, the Living Torah, who leads us spiritually even as the Messenger of YHVH led the Israelites in the pillar of fire. We must also hang on to the Torah—YHVH's instructions in righteousness, for it will guide and keep us in the paths of righteousness as we press on toward the Promised Land. This is the deeper implication of Proverbs 29:18.

