

Class 4

Discussion of Sections 5: Jesus and the Fulfillment of the Torah & 6: The Foundation for the New Testament

Remember that the Torah is the moral and legal foundation of all societies, as discussed in the previous session, and how the Torah provides the framework for the rest of the Old Testament.

Today: We explore how Jesus **affirms** and **fulfills** the teachings of the Torah, and understand how the Torah provides the foundation for the New Testament. By the end of this session, you should have a clearer understanding of how Jesus fulfills the Torah and how the Torah lays the foundation for the New Testament's teachings on **faith, salvation,** and the **New Covenant** in Christ.

5. Jesus and the Fulfillment of the Torah

1. Jesus Affirms and Fulfills the Moral Law

Matthew 5:17-18 (NKJV) "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

Jesus declares that He has not come to abolish the Law (the Torah) but to **fulfill** it. The word "fulfill" is key here. Jesus isn't discarding the Torah; rather, He is bringing it to its **full expression**.

The **moral law**—the commandments concerning right and wrong—remains intact. In fact, Jesus intensifies the moral expectations of the Torah. This means that He upholds the **moral teachings** of the Torah while also completing its **ceremonial** and **sacrificial** requirements. The word "fulfill" implies bringing the law to its intended purpose and perfection through His life, death, and resurrection.

1. Jesus and the Moral Law: The moral commandments (such as the Ten Commandments) remain valid, but Jesus provides a deeper understanding of them. For example:

Mt 5:21-22 (NKJV) — 21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the

judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

Jesus teaches that the commandment "You shall not murder" extends beyond physical killing to include **anger and hatred** in the heart.

Mt 5:27-28 (NKJV) — 27 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

He expands the commandment against adultery to include **lustful thoughts**, demonstrating that righteousness goes beyond outward actions to the condition of the heart.

Jesus is not relaxing the moral demands of the Torah but instead intensifying them to focus on the heart's motivation. This deeper understanding challenges us to look beyond the surface of moral behavior. Jesus' fulfillment of the moral law calls us **to holiness in heart and mind**. His interpretation of the Torah is not easier; it is deeper, penetrating to the motivations behind actions.

2. Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Ceremonial and Sacrificial Laws

The Torah contains **ceremonial laws** (such as dietary restrictions and ritual purity) and **sacrificial laws** (such as offerings for sin and atonement). In the **Book of Leviticus**, we see an elaborate system of sacrifices meant to atone for sin. But this system was only a shadow of the **perfect sacrifice** to come. Jesus fulfills these aspects of the law by becoming the **perfect sacrifice** for sin and replacing the ceremonial system with the New Covenant.

Jn 1:29 (NKJV) — 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Jesus is identified as the **Lamb of God**, referencing the **Passover lamb** from Exodus 12, whose blood protected the Israelites from judgment. Jesus' role as the Lamb of God signifies that His sacrifice will take away the sins of the world, replacing the need for continual animal sacrifices. In this way, Jesus completes the **sacrificial system** of the Torah.

We then read **Hebrews 9:11-12**, which explains how Jesus, as our High Priest, enters the **heavenly tabernacle** and offers His own blood, not the blood of animals, to secure eternal redemption. Jesus fulfills the entire **ceremonial law**, including the festivals and sacrifices that pointed to Him all alone.

Heb 9:11-12 (NKJV) — 11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Jesus fulfills the entire **sacrificial system** described in **Leviticus**. As the High Priest and the perfect sacrifice, He offers His own blood for the atonement of sin, replacing the need for ongoing sacrifices in the temple.

Jesus' sacrifice is **once and for all**, meaning believers no longer need to rely on rituals or animal sacrifices for forgiveness. We are freed from the old sacrificial system. His death and resurrection make the ceremonial laws of the Torah obsolete, as they have reached their ultimate fulfillment in Him. We approach God not through rituals or works but through faith in Jesus' finished work.

3. Jesus as the New Moses and Mediator of the New Covenant

Jesus is often depicted as a **New Moses**, leading His people in a new exodus from sin and establishing a **New Covenant** that fulfills the law given through Moses.

Dt 18:15 (NKJV) — 15 "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

Moses prophesies that God will raise up a prophet like himself, which many Jews and Christians interpret as a prophecy about **Jesus**. Jesus is the new lawgiver, teaching the **law of grace** and the **kingdom of God**.

Heb 8:6 (NKJV) — 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

Jesus mediates the **New Covenant**, which is superior to the Old Covenant because it is based on better promises—namely, the forgiveness of sins through His blood and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, as the new Moses, not only gives a new law of **grace and love** but also mediates a covenant where salvation is not based on keeping the law but on faith in His atoning work.

We are living under the New Covenant, which calls for a relationship with God through **faith** in Christ and the indwelling of the **Holy Spirit**, rather than reliance on the ceremonial laws of the Torah.

6. The Torah as the Foundation for the New Testament

1. The Torah is the Foundation and context for the New Testament

The themes of **covenant**, **law**, and **redemption** through the **promise of the Messiah**. That run throughout the New Testament are deeply rooted in the Torah.

We turn to **Romans**, where Paul uses the story of **Abraham** from Genesis to explain the doctrine of **justification by faith**. Abraham's faith was "counted to him as righteousness," long before the law was given. Paul shows that this principle applies to us under the New

Covenant—**faith in Jesus** leads to justification, not works of the law. This connection to Abraham's story shows that the New Testament's teachings on salvation are rooted in the Torah.

Salvation is by faith alone.

Ro 4:1–13 (NKJV) — 1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found 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 accounted to him for righteousness." 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: 7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin." 9 Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, 12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. 13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Our faith is now in Jesus Christ. He fulfills all of the Old Testament requirements.

Ro 4:3 (NKJV) — 3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Explanation: Paul uses the story of **Abraham** from the Torah to explain the concept of **justification by faith**. This connection shows that the New Testament doctrine of salvation by grace through faith is rooted in the **Abrahamic covenant**.

Ga 3:6–9 (NKJV) — 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Paul explains that the **promise** given to Abraham in the Torah is fulfilled in Christ. The **Torah** is foundational for understanding the **gospel** and the inclusion of Gentiles in the promises of God.

There is **continuity** between the Old Testament (Torah) and the New Testament. The Torah provides the framework for understanding **salvation, faith, and God's promises**.

2. The Torah and the Teachings of Jesus

Jesus often quoted from and referenced the **Torah** in His teachings. The Torah formed the basis for much of His moral and ethical teaching in the New Testament.

Mt 22:37-40 (NKJV) — 37 Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Jesus summarizes the Torah in two commandments—**love for God** and **love for neighbor**. This summary encapsulates the entire moral and ethical teaching of the Torah and shows its relevance in the New Testament.

This teaching reinforces the idea that the Torah's **moral principles** remain relevant, not as a path to salvation but as a guide for **righteous living**. The Torah points forward to Christ, and through Him, its deepest ethical teachings—love for God and others—are fully realized.

The Torah's moral teachings are not abolished but are carried into the New Testament through Christ's emphasis on **love**.

3. The Torah's Role in the New Covenant

The New Testament portrays Jesus as fulfilling the **covenantal promises** made in the Torah, establishing the **New Covenant** through His death and resurrection.

Lk 22:20 (NKJV) — 20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.”

Jesus' death institutes the **New Covenant**, a fulfillment of the covenants outlined in the Torah. His sacrifice replaces the need for the sacrificial system, offering a once-for-all atonement for sin.

The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16) and the sacrificial system prefigure the ultimate sacrifice of Christ. ***Hebrews 9:12 (NKJV): “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”*** Christ's sacrifice fulfills the atonement that the Torah pointed toward, bringing a new covenant based on His shed blood.

This New Covenant fulfills the covenants of the Torah, particularly the **Abrahamic** and **Mosaic** covenants. The blood of the lamb that protected Israel during the Exodus prefigures Christ's blood, which brings salvation to believers. Jesus' blood brings about the **forgiveness of sins** and fulfills the covenant promises made in the Torah.

The **Torah's promises** are fulfilled in Christ, and Christians now live under the **New Covenant**, which brings **forgiveness of sins** and **reconciliation with God**.

God has given us the honor of living in this covenant relationship by his grace.

Questions:

- "How does understanding that Jesus fulfills the Torah deepen your appreciation for His role as Savior?"
- "In what ways does the Torah provide the foundation for the teachings of the New Testament?"
- "How do we, as New Testament believers, continue to live out the moral principles of the Torah in light of Christ's fulfillment of the law?"

For Further Study:

- Read Hebrews 9–10 to further explore how Jesus' sacrifice fulfills the Torah's sacrificial system.