

## CHAPTER ONE

**BIBLE BELIEVERS**

If there is one thing that binds us together, Jews and Gentiles, in the Messiah, it is the desire to live holy before God – to live in such a way that we please and honor Him. The problem in the diversity amongst believers is that there are so many views and opinions on just how to accomplish this very goal. In order to discover the truth, I believe we need to return to the whole word of God, which includes both the Old and the New Testament portions of the Bible. We must give up our tendency to be ‘New Testament Believers’, and instead become ‘Bible Believers’. I confess that I sometimes carry around in my purse a compact copy of the New Testament with Psalms and proverbs that someone in Israel handed me for free. Often, I find myself with a few spare moments while waiting for a bus or an appointment, and like to take this spontaneous opportunity for a ‘snack’ on the Word. Even with the size of my purse, it is just not convenient to lug around my entire Hebrew-English Bible. But this ‘New Testament Bible’ is what I call ‘the amputated version’. Its entire foundation has been cut off. The fact that missionaries often hand these out, is a very disturbing sign in Christianity today.

I thank God for the New Testament and read from it practically every day, but it is not what Yeshua<sup>1</sup> nor His disciples called the

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Yeshua’ is the Hebrew name for ‘Jesus’ and in Hebrew means literally ‘salvation’.

Word of God. When they referred to the Word, it was the Tanach – Torah (five books of Moses), Nivi'im (prophets) and ktuvim (writings such as psalms, proverbs, etc). When Yeshua explained how the scriptures reveal the Messiah, He shared only from the Tanach – specifically the book of Isaiah. Paul wrote

**“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

(2 Tim. 4:16)

But do we realize that the ‘all scripture’ Paul spoke of referred only to the Old Testament, as the New had not yet been canonized? Now please don’t misunderstand me! I don’t want a flood of indignant letters from people defending the New Testament as scripture. I agree that the Holy Spirit also divinely inspired these writings. I am only trying to restore a balance to the way that we view the Bible – as a complete book. Basing our doctrines about Yeshua and our walk with God on the New Testament exclusively will give us a warped theology. It is like building a magnificent building with a faulty foundation. We need only to look at the recent tragedy here in Jerusalem, in which a wedding hall collapsed, killing several people and crushing over one hundred others, to see the tragic fallout of such an error. We must not ‘skimp’ on foundational materials or we may see a terrible ‘cave in’ one day in our faith. Yeshua told us we must build upon the rock, not sand. Basing our beliefs upon the New Testament alone, without the solid foundation of the Old Testament, it like building on shifting sand. When the storm comes and the wind rages against us, our house may not stand the test. Now if the Tanach was good enough for Yeshua (Jesus) , it most definitely should be good enough for us too!

## Lack of Knowledge

I have noticed something peculiar since coming into contact with non-Jewish Believers. This is the disregard and in some cases ignorance of God's standards in the matter of our food choices.

**“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law (Torah) of your God, I also will forget your children.”** (Hos. 4:6)

This is a terrible price to pay for ignorance – the loss of our priestly privilege and God's favor towards our children. In speaking with Christian youth, I am amazed at how many of them, raised in the Christian Church all their lives, listening to sermons every Sunday have no idea that God has spoken in His word against the eating of certain foods. At almost every Christian function we attend, unless the people are involved with a Messianic congregation, pork is the number one item on the menu. Christian camps, Women's Aglow, and home fellowships usually serve food that God has declared unclean, and unfit for consumption by a Holy People. You would think that, at least in Israel, the situation would be a little different. But at a recent fellowship meeting of Russian believers, I noticed a dish of food that looked suspiciously like seafood salad. Trying to be discrete, I asked the hostess if this food was, indeed, what it appeared to be. Being decidedly non-discrete, this hostess hollered across the room to the woman who brought the salad, asking her if it contained shrimp and crab. 'Yes,' was her reply, 'Why?' This stirred up a flurry of comments and questions. One woman took me aside in the kitchen and said, 'Well, what could be wrong with it? It's all from the sea, you know.' I tried to politely and gently point out that God has said something quite different about this seafood in His word. She was