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MINISTRIES

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Brit Hadasha: Was Yeshua a False Prophet?

Counter-missionaries often claim that Yeshua was a false prophet according to the *TANAKH*—the Old Testament. And therefore, according to the counter-missionaries, Yeshua could not be the Messiah. In this teaching we will be exploring one of the arguments that the counter-missionaries give in support of this claim and refuting them.

Before we dive in, if you haven’t seen our teaching, [Why Yeshua is the Messiah](#), we recommend watching that teaching first. We make a positive case for why Yeshua is the only possible candidate for Israel’s Messiah according to the Scriptures.

So, what are the arguments in support of the claim that Yeshua was a false prophet? There are three common assertions:

- 1) Yeshua taught against the Torah
- 2) Yeshua led people away from the God of Israel
- 3) Yeshua made false prophecies

Regarding the first two assertions, it’s certainly true that the *TANAKH* clearly defines a false prophet as one who leads people away from the God of Israel and His Commandments:

Deuteronomy 13:1-5

“If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer of dreams. For the Lord (Yahweh) your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord (Yahweh) your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the Lord (Yahweh) your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord (Yahweh) your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the Lord (Yahweh) your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil

from your midst.

Based on this passage, it is claimed that Yeshua both led people away from the Torah and the God of Israel. Therefore, He is a false prophet according to Scripture and is disqualified to be the Messiah of Israel. But, is there any truth to these accusations?

As we examine the New Testament writings, which tell us about the life and ministry of Yeshua, we can clearly see that there is simply no evidence for these claims. In fact, the evidence suggests the exact opposite! Let's look at the first claim—that Yeshua taught against the Torah.

Aside from a few misunderstood passages, which we have already addressed in depth in other teachings, the evidence we have in the New Testament overwhelmingly supports the exact opposite conclusion.

Indeed, Yeshua affirmed the Torah and taught His followers to keep it.

Yeshua Himself confronts this very objection head on in Matthew 5:17-19.

Matthew 5:17-19

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

From this passage we can see that Yeshua taught the ongoing validity of every commandment in the Torah. He even says that His followers will continue to “do” and “teach” even the least of the commandments in the Torah.

If Yeshua rejected certain commandments in the Torah, why would He say this?

Why would He say that His followers are identified by their obedience to God's commandments if He allegedly taught against those very commandments?

Why would He say that nothing will pass away from the Torah if He allegedly taught that some of those same commandments are irrelevant?

Not only did Yeshua affirm the validity of the commandments in the Torah, but he also explained each commandment at a higher level. For instance, the Torah says not to murder. Yeshua reveals the root of this commandment by addressing the murderous attitudes of our heart:

Matthew 5:21-22

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.”

Similarly, the Torah says not to commit adultery. Yeshua reveals the root of this commandment by addressing the adulterous attitudes of the heart:

Matthew 5:27-28

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

These and other passages show that Yeshua used the commands of the Torah as His basis for addressing matters of the heart. It wouldn’t make sense for Him to expound on these commandments while at the same time teaching that they are irrelevant.

What about the Sabbath and the biblical festivals? Well, the *Brit Chadashah*—the New Testament—demonstrates that Yeshua continued to keep them!

Indeed, Yeshua’s “custom” was to attend synagogue every Sabbath:

Luke 4:16

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.”

Mark 1:21

“And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching.”

In addition to the Sabbath, the *Brit Hadashah* records that Yeshua kept:

- Passover/Unleavened Bread (Matt 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22)
- Sukkot (John 7:1-14)

Not only that, but the original Messianic movement of the first century continued to keep the Sabbath and feasts throughout the first century:

- Passover/Unleavened Bread (Acts 20:6, 1 Corinthians 5:7-8)
- Shavuot (Acts 2:1; 20:16)
- Yom Kippur (Acts 27:9)
- Sukkot (Acts 18:21)

This begs the question: If Yeshua taught against certain parts of the Torah—namely the Sabbath and feast days—why would His original followers continue to keep them?

The obvious answer is that Yeshua didn’t teach against them.

On the contrary, He affirmed them and taught His followers to keep them too. Thus, this assertion from the anti-missionaries is simply without basis.

What about the second claim—that Yeshua led people away from the God of Israel?

It is usually claimed that Yeshua taught people to abandon the God of Israel and follow another god—namely Yeshua Himself—in direct violation of Deuteronomy 13:1-5. Is there any truth to this claim?

Without entering into the complexity on the nature of Yeshua himself, even a plain reading of the *Brit*

Hadashah writings shows this assertion to be utterly false. Far from leading people away from the God of Israel, Yeshua taught His followers to love the God of Israel, obey Him, and follow Him.

When Yeshua was asked about the greatest command in the Torah, He responded with the *shema*:

Mark 1:21

“And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, ‘Which commandment is the most important of all?’ Jesus answered, ‘The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’”

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 is clear that we are not to listen to any prophet who attempts to lead us away from the God of Israel, even if they perform amazing signs and wonders. In harmony with this passage, Yeshua’s healing ministry brought glory to the God of Israel:

Matthew 5:29-31

“Jesus (Yeshua) went on from there and walked beside the Sea of Galilee. And he went up on the mountain and sat down there. And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, so that the crowd wondered, when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel.”

Yeshua clearly taught that we are to live our lives to the glory of the God of Israel, not any other god:

Matthew 5:14-16

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Yeshua taught us to pray to the God of Israel, not to any other god:

Matthew 6:9-10

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Yeshua taught us that worship belongs to the God of Israel, not to any other god:

John 4:22-24

“You [Samaritans] worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

We could go on and on. In fact, there are more than 1,200 references to the God of Israel in the *Brit Hadashah*. So contrary to the counter-missionary claim that Yeshua led people away from the God of Israel, the truth is that worship of the one true God of Israel was central to Yeshua’s life and ministry.

When the counter-missionaries are forced to concede that their first two assertions are utterly false, they might resort to claiming that Yeshua made false prophecies. Let's consider this assertion. The Torah says this:

Deuteronomy 18:22

“When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord (Yahweh), if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord (Yahweh) has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.”

On the basis of this passage, counter-missionaries will often assert that Yeshua is a false prophet since he allegedly made false prophecies. It is claimed that Yeshua said His disciples would live to see His return, but Yeshua did not return in the lifetimes of His disciples. This claim is based on Matthew 16:27-28:

Matthew 16:27-18

“For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

The first point to bring up here is that the New Testament authors obviously believed in Yeshua and were promoting His teachings. If they believed that this was a false prophecy, which would have disqualified Yeshua as the Messiah, then why would they have included it in their writings? It's simply unreasonable to think that they would. Think about that for a moment.

Secondly, those who make this assertion fail to consider the context of Yeshua's statement. When we continue reading, we see in the following verses that this prophecy occurred exactly as Yeshua said it would—that is, some of those who stood there there did in fact see Yeshua the Messiah in power and glory:

Matthew 17:1-6

“And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus (Yeshua), ‘Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.’ He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.’ When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus (Yeshua) came and touched them, saying ‘Rise, and have no fear.’ And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus (Yeshua) only.”

As we can see, Yeshua was not speaking of His Second Coming, which is still to occur in the future, but about his transfiguration that happened six days later, giving his disciples a picture of his return at the end of the age.

Another passage that counter-missionaries sometimes cite to suggest that Yeshua made false prophecies is Matthew 24:34.

Matthew 24:34

“Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.”

This verse in the context of Yeshua’s answer to His disciples’ questions in Matthew 24:3. The questions were regarding when the Temple would be destroyed and what would be the sign of Yeshua coming and of the end of the age.

Yeshua answers this question by prophesying of great wars, persecution, and eventually the Son of Man returning in the clouds of heaven. It is asserted that Yeshua did not return before that generation passed away; therefore, He falsely prophesied.

In his commentary on this passage, Dr. Michael Brown summarizes a few of the options for how we can interpret this verse:

“First, it is possible that he was speaking about *the final generation*, in other words, about the generation that would see his return, explaining to his disciples (and to all subsequent readers) that those who lived to see certain specific signs fulfilled would be the ones who would see his coming. (It would be as if he said, “Those of you who will be around to hear the thunder and see the lightning will be the one who will get wet!”) Second, it is possible that he was speaking to *his own generation* about the coming destruction of the Temple, informing them that it would happen in their lifetimes (which it did, just 40 years later). As to his return, however, he stressed that ‘No one knows about that day or hour’ (Matt. 24:36). Thus, he was addressing both of the disciples’ questions, telling them that the Temple would be destroyed in their generation and informing them that no one knew the time of his return. Third, the Greek word translated “generation” in Matthew 24:34 is *genea*, a word which normally means generation, posterity, but can sometimes mean race. So, Jesus could have simply been assuring his followers that, despite terrible world-wide calamity and suffering, his own people, the Jewish race, would not pass away until all these things were fulfilled.”

-Dr. Michael Brown, Answering Jewish Objections: Vol. 4

Either of those options, especially the first and the second one, are far more likely than the assertion that Yeshua falsely prophesied. Again, why would the author include these words of Yeshua if he believed them to have been false prophecies—especially when the author believed Yeshua to be the Messiah and the entire objective was to promote Yeshua’s life and teachings?

In conclusion, when we test the counter-missionary claim that Yeshua was a false prophet to the Scriptures, we can clearly see that the assertions in support of this claim are without merit. In fact, every indication in the New Testament is that Yeshua was a faithful prophet who pointed His followers to the God of Israel as the one true God, promoted obedience to God’s commandments, and prophesied accurately in God’s name.

For more on this topic, we would recommend our teaching, [The Deuteronomy 13 Test](#).

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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