# Israelites are the Living Light of the World

## Summary

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*11. "Israelites are Salt of the Earth"*

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Loving enemies, showing mercy, living the golden rule — Yah'shua's Sermon on the Mount teachings are easy to admire and hard to live. This article measures professing Christian nations against their own professed standard, and points toward what a genuinely converted life looks like instead.

- Yah'shua's Sermon on the Mount teachings on loving enemies, mercy, and the golden rule.
- 2 Timothy 3's warning against a merely formal religion "holding the form... but denying the power."
- The line between a one-time "decision for Christ" and an ongoing, commandment-keeping way of life.
- The rich young ruler as an illustration of true conversion's cost.
- Guidance from 1 Peter 3 on winning an unconverted spouse or relative by conduct rather than argument.

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# Israelites are the Living Light of the World

Yah'shua clearly explained what a real Israelite is like. As we consider what He said, we need to ask ourselves why the qualities He described seem to be so hard to find in *Christian* professing nations.

Take Yah'shua's teachings from the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Luke 6. It says; "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you". Some of the most bloody battles in history have been waged by *Christian* nations! "No nations are more warlike than those which profess *Christianity*", observed Pierre Bayle, a 17th-century French philosopher of *Christian* Europe. He could have written the same thing of the 21st century! Professing *Christians* have risen up in war against each other, *(and of course, so have other nations)*, all the while praying to the same God for victory; the God who said "love your enemies"!

The English poet Shelley commented: "The same means that have supported every other popular belief have supported *Christianity*. War, imprisonment, assassination and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is". How can this be? The one who is supposed to be the founder of the *Christian* religion taught His followers to, "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you" *(Luke 6:27,28).*

This instruction of Yah'shua is hardly followed by *Christian* nations in times of war. But then how often is it followed in times of peace? Where is it put into practice in neighbourhoods, in social circles, among the people you know on a day-to-day basis?

Yah'shua also said: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" *(verse 31)*. That has been called the golden rule. It is thought of as a good slogan to hang on a wall, or to dangle from a charm bracelet, or to teach little children. But live by it? Yah'shua did not mean it as a suggestion. It was not His thought for the day. For Yah'shua, it was meant as a living law that He commanded his followers - Israelites, to apply in their daily lives!

"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father *(Yahweh)* also is merciful, judge not and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" *(verses 36,37)*. How often does merciful kindness govern what is taking place? Think of the competition and greed in business - the cheating, the gouging; the primary emphasis in today's world is on getting the advantage over others, even if it is necessary to hurt them a little *(in some cases, a lot)* to do it.

Our political sphere resounds with name calling, cheating, propaganda, condemnation, resentment, personal greed, and total deceit. Gossip and back-biting are ever-popular themes in private and public

conversation. Movies, novels and television programs, including children's shows, dwell on ideas of getting even, seeking revenge, sexual promiscuity, and violence. All this in a Christian land!

Instances of genuine mercy from one human being to another in the media are remarkable and memorable because they are so uncommon. Yah'shua's teaching covered the great themes of life, and it reaches down to simple lacks of consideration such as being responsible for a blaring radio, a loud motorcycle, litter, damage to public facilities, graffiti and so on.

The Bible describes a society in our time when its religion is a mere form, not having the substance or power to change people's lives. It reads like the front page of many newspapers: "For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, fierce, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of Yahweh, holding the form of religion but denying the power of it" *(2 Timothy 3:2-5)*.

If this doesn't describe most modern western nations, nothing does!

Yah'shua knew that some would call him their "Lord", who would profess to belong to him, but who would not put His teachings into practice. Here is what Yah'shua said to his audience, then and now: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). A "lord" is ruler, a master; one who is to be obeyed. In plain language, Yah'shua said: "If you won't obey me don't call me `Lord'"! He further said, "ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). Again; "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Clearly, only a man or woman who does what Yah'shua said to do; who puts into practice the great principles He taught, has the right (and the respective blessings) of calling Him "Lord"!

True New Covenant Israelite faith involves faith and belief, but it is not merely a set of beliefs or casually joining a man-made "church", or being "born again" into some religion. It is not something to be practiced one day a week or at odd intervals. Early Israelites referred to it as "the Way of Yahweh" *(Acts 18:25)*, and "the way of Yahweh" *(verse 26)*. "I am the way, the truth, and the life", the Messiah declared *(John 14:6)*. True New Covenant Israelite faith is the Israelite way of life. No one can follow what Yah'shua taught without a marked change in life and lifestyle. Notice how this fact is illustrated in the following example: A rich young man once came to Yah'shua and asked, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life" (*Matt. 19:16)*. This man knew following the Messiah involved DOING something! "And He *(Yah'shua)* said unto him...if thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS" *(verse 17)*.

There was no doubt Yah'shua was talking about the commandments as set out in the Law of Moses. When the young man asked which ones, Yah'shua specifically named the ones having to do with showing love toward one's neighbour. To this, the young man replied that he had been keeping those and all the commandments since youth *(he had been reared a Jew)*, but he wanted to become a follower of Yah'shua.

Yah'shua required in His followers, true depth of conversion. He knew the young man had a problem - keeping in their true intent, those commandments regarding SELFLESS LOVE; giving to one's neighbour. So Yah'shua bluntly told him that his wealth was an obstacle to him; that he needed to get rid of it. Only then he could become a true follower of Yah'shua. Of course, just because one is wealthy does not prevent one from being an Israelite. Abraham, Solomon and others of great wealth, were Biblical examples of character that was righteous before Yahweh. But human nature and one's attitude tend toward concentration on self and one's own wealth instead of on the needs of others. Israelites must learn to properly balance both of these. Sadly, the young man departed, unwilling to change his attitude.

The Messiah has revealed principles that bear on every facet of life; every activity, every social situation, every endeavour, every goal and plan. We are even to let our innermost thoughts be ruled by the Lord Yah'shua, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of the Messiah", as Paul expressed it *(2 Corinthians 10:5)*.

But these inspired instructions are seldom followed today. In the mass evangelistic campaigns of the *Christian* world people are encouraged to make a spur-of-the-moment "decision for the *Christ*", and to come forward in an "altar call", and to be pronounced "saved" or "born Again"! That is not how the Bible says we are to receive His Holy Spirit, which is the free gift GIVEN BY Yahweh, leading us to eternal life!

Here is where many people stumble. They begin to think they know what real New Covenant Israelite faith is all about and to look around at people they know. Or they think of individuals they have known in the past; friends, relatives perhaps, and they use them as standards of comparison. They say to themselves; "Uncle Henry and Aunt Ruth and my friend John did not obey Yah'shua' explicit instructions, but they weren't `bad' people either. They lived the way they thought was right. I'll take my chances along with them and with millions of other professing *Christians* who are just average good people. Surely Yahweh won't deny eternal life or salvation to them! Yahweh is merciful".

Yahweh is merciful, that's true. But then what did Yah'shua mean when He said keep all the commandments? He meant exactly what He said! Uncle Henry and Aunt Ruth and friend John and all the millions who have professed *Christianity* without ever understanding what it really is to become an Israelite, will eventually have their opportunity to understand. They too will learn that in order to have the mind of the Messiah in us, it is necessary to keep all the commandments!

If learning this doesn't happen in this life it will happen in a future period of judgement when Yahweh's government rules the earth. That period of time is described in Ezekiel 16:55 and 60-63, Matthew 11:20-24, Luke 10:12-14 and Revelation 20:11-12. This "GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT" occurs after the 1,000 years *(Rev. 20:2-4),* "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished..."*(verse 5)*.

This Judgement will provide these people a lifetime of new experience - like the judgement in this lifetime that is occurring on true Israelites *(the elect)* today *(1 Peter 4:17)*! "If ye know these things", Yah'shua

exclaimed; "happy are ye if ye do them" *(John 13:17)*!

John revealed how we can know who is, and who is not a real Israelite: "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" *(1 John 2:3-4)*. To know Yahweh and His Messiah, and they are "one", in full harmony as Yah'shua said, we need to experience the kind of character they possess. And Yahweh's very character is directly expressed in His law, beginning in the Ten Commandments.

Those who say they are Israelites and do not keep Yahweh's commandments do not know by experience the character of Yahweh. What is Yahweh's character? "For Yahweh is love" *(1 John 4:8)*. Again, "For this is the love of Yahweh, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not burdensome" *(1 John 5:3)*.

So a true Israelite will "walk with Yahweh", and will live by Yahweh's law of love; by "every word that proceeds from the mouth of Yahweh". And by exercising this kind of Godly character, he will come to know Yahweh. At this point, some may be wondering how they can become "perfect". They have heard ministers say, "the law is spiritual, and you can't keep it". Both points are absolutely right! The law of Yahweh is spiritual. And man, by himself, cut off from Yahweh, cannot keep that spiritual law perfectly.

First, Yahweh does not demand instant perfection. Rather, through His inspired Word, He tells us, "but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Yah'shua the Messiah" *(2 Peter 3:18)*. The true Israelite life is one of learning, overcoming and growing toward the Yahweh-like character that is our ideal. For Yah'shua said: "I have kept my Father's commandments" *(John 15:10)*. And Paul wrote; "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of the Messiah" *(1 Corinthians 11:1)*.

Notice Paul's description of the problem: "The carnal *[natural]* mind is enmity against Yahweh: for it is not subject to the law of Yahweh, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please Yahweh" (*Romans 8:7,8)*.

Paul is saying that what causes the normal *(carnal)* human being a problem with Yahweh, is that he is antagonistic to Yahweh's law and will not submit to it, but rather submits to the "natural" laws of the physical (carnal) senses. We all are certainly "in the flesh", in the sense that we are human, but Paul means: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in His Holy Spirit, if so be that His Spirit of Yahweh dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of the Messiah, he is none of His" *(verse 9)*. Again, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of Yahweh, these are sons of Yahweh" *(verse 14)*.

This is the ultimate key to true New Covenant Israelite faith! If you have been deeply humbled and converted by your Creator; have surrendered, even though not yet perfectly, to allow Yahweh and His Messiah to live in you through the power of His Holy Spirit, then and only then are you truly an Israelite!

Of course, you will still have human nature, the world around you and the invisible influence of Satan the devil to overcome.

You will grow in grace and in knowledge, studying the Bible for instruction with an open mind and heart, praying for understanding and for the spiritual strength to live Yahweh's way. Then Yahweh will be making you His child by putting His very Spiritual nature in you. Step by step, you will reflect in your daily life, the character and obedience of Yahweh the Father that Yah'shua demonstrated in His human life. Yahweh will become more and more real to you. You will demonstrably see that His laws are living laws, just like the physical law of gravity. They all work automatically, no matter whether you, or this or that theologian, believes in them or not.

Yah'shua quoted the prophet Isaiah in speaking of the religious leaders and people of His day: "...this people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (*Mark 7:6)*. Religion is often superficial. What is lacking is deeply sincere repentance. This is what distinguishes real New Covenant Israelite faith from the traditional. A dictionary definition of repentance is: "to feel self-reproach, compunction, or contrition for past conduct, to feel such sorrow for sin or fault as to be disposed to change one's life for the better".

Godly repentance means to stop sinning *(by first realizing that sin is the transgression of Yahweh's laws of love - 1 John 3:4)*, and to turn and go the other way - to change your way of life! It's not always easy to say I'm sorry, but it's even harder to mean it. Godly repentance has to come from the heart and it involves a fundamental change of attitude and mind.

Speaking of a sinful people, Yahweh says; "And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: ...they rebel against me...They return, but not to the most High" *(Hos. 7:14-16*). People have made an outward show of returning to Yahweh, but they haven't done it with their hearts. What the world calls repentance, is all too often, outward, superficial worldly repentance, with no real sincerity or deep feeling.

Any time you break or disobey any one of the holy, righteous commandments of Yahweh, you have sinned and you need to repent of that sin. No one is excluded. No man, woman or child *(other than the Messiah)* has ever lived who has not disobeyed and broken Yahweh's law *(Romans 3:10,23)*. Therefore, everyone must face the need to repent deeply, and sometimes bitterly. To become a genuine Israelite we each must ask the Father in heaven that the Messiah's shed blood cover our sins; that the sacrifice of His life be accepted in our stead so the penalty for our sins can be removed from us. Then we need to begin to obey Yahweh. We need to establish a new and different approach to life. We now begin to keep His commandments - all of them - with zeal!

Of course, we can't just drum up the deep feeling of abhorrence for our sins by ourselves. It has to come from Yahweh; for, "THE GOODNESS OF Yahweh LEADETH THEE TO REPENTANCE" *(Romans 2:4)*. It is Yahweh who helps us to see our own shortcomings, and opens our minds and starts us on the

way to repentance. The Bible names dozens of individuals who are going to be in the kingdom of Yahweh. David, Daniel and other servants found out how to reach the Creator of the universe. As soon as they realized Yahweh was displeased with them or their nation's ways, they set out to correct the situation.

Yahweh calls people to repentance through chastening. Often He allows financial problems, family problems, sickness, or other serious situations to develop so that we can realize our need of Him. These trials are proof of the Father's love for each one whom He calls to repentance. Notice Hebrews 12:6,7; "for whom Yahweh loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, Yahweh dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

Instead of fighting these problems in our own strength, we need to learn the lesson Yahweh is teaching us. We need to begin to seek Him. He doesn't need us - we do need Him!

Have you tried to get others converted - "saved", as many traditional Christians express it? Have you started to "preach"? If you have you have probably started controversy, antagonism - lost a friend, or even a wife or husband. But if you haven't started - DON'T!

Like all unconverted people, you may have been self-centered, and selfish, but now instead of so much self-concern, you have an abundance of enthusiastic outgoing concern for others. Especially for your own family, relatives and friends. You want to share this wonderful truth. You want them to have the "firstfruits" benefits of Yahweh's plan of salvation. Yah'shua told us we are the light of the world and that we must let our light shine: "ye are the light of the world...let your light so shine before men, that they may SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS". *(Matt. 5:14,16).* Notice carefully that He did not say "that they may HEAR your good arguments"! He said that they may see your good works.

A nearly universal mistake is committed by traditional *Christians* and by many newly converted, especially where a husband or wife yields to Yahweh's truth without the other. In very few, if any instances, has the unconverted mate *(or friend)* been talked into accepting it. Of all things evil and harmful you may do as a new Israelite, the very worst is to try and talk your spouse, friend or relative into your religion. If you love them, don't do it!

Remember these scriptures: "No man can come to me," Yah'shua said, "except the Father which hath sent me draw him" *(John 6:44,65)*. Again Yah'shua speaks to Israelite women through the apostle Peter's letter, "Likewise, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the Word, they, WITHOUT A WORD, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they OBSERVE your chaste conduct..." *(1 Peter 3:1,2)*.

Yahweh made every human a free moral agent. Thank Yahweh! No one has power to force on you any unwanted religion. Every man or woman must make his or her own decision. A religious difference between husband and wife *(or relative, best friend)* is a serious handicap. But if such a difference already exists, do not make matters worse by talking about your religion. Do all your talking to Yahweh in prayer.

Let your mate *(or relative, friend)* SEE your happy, pleasant, cheerful, joyful, loving way of life - not hear your arguments or nagging! Never try to talk anyone into accepting Bible truths - it's not Yahweh's way!

Paul spoke to unconverted Jews: "Unto the Hebrews I became as a Hebrew" *(1 Corinthians 9:20,22)*. He spoke to others from their point of view. He talked to Hebrews, from the Hebrew viewpoint, showing sympathy and understanding of their way of looking at New Covenant Israelite faith.

They were hostile to the idea of Yah'shua being the promised Messiah. Paul did not further arouse this hostility - he put it down. He got on the inside, so to speak, just as one of them, so that they were sympathetic toward his efforts. He became a Hebrew, "that I might gain the Hebrews". Even so he gained only a small minority, yet it was a large number.

One of the main principles of successful advertising is that to get results you must first learn the attitude of your audience toward your product or service. You must not antagonize those whom you expect to persuade. Approach your topic from their point of view. "FREELY YOU HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE"! In other words, SHARE your spiritually discerned, revealed understandings of Yahweh's Word, with anyone who LISTENS OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL!

And remember to have faith in one absolute! If Yahweh decides the time is right for one of His children to be "called" into His Congregation, then Yahweh, and only Yahweh, through His Holy Spirit will surely do just that!

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