

By What Authority

Teaching by David Rogers at HOI Charlotte, NC on 4/5/15 (2:55:48)

Arthur Bailey: Shabbat Shalom Saints!

Ladies and gentlemen, it is always an honor to have Brother David Rodgers come and speak, and I know that we're fortunate to have Brother David and the gift and the anointing that Father has placed on him and placed in him. David is a very analytical minister. He loves to get into the intricacies and the details. When he's done, you can know that he has done a thorough job on the subject that he is going to present. I haven't heard this message, but I can say in confidence before I hear it — come on Brother David — that based on his history, it will be another one of “those” messages.

David: Thank you Arthur. Hag Sameach!

This is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as you know. That's why we're gathered here in holy convocation today. The first of three annual pilgrimage festivals — the word “Hag” actually means “pilgrimage” more than it means “feast.” We kind of attach the word “feast” to it because typically we are going up to appear before the presence of YeHoVaH in order to enjoy — first of all, to present our tithes and our offerings to YeHoVaH as a means of thanking Him for the increase in our fields and our flocks and whatever business we've been involved with since the last feast.

We go up for this pilgrimage to the presence of YeHoVaH. This is to be a time of great joy and blessing. We say typically on a Sabbath day, “Shabbat Shalom!” which means “Sabbath Peace” (literally). But on a feast day we say “Hag Sameach!” which means “joyful” or “happy pilgrimage festival.” So those aren't really biblical greetings, but they are appropriate greetings to convey upon our brothers: Shalom during the Sabbath day; and joy, great joy during the festival seasons.

So here we are gathered together in obedience to the commandment to have this time of fellowship; this time of reading the word and rejoicing before YeHoVaH who has provided great blessings to us. But we have Christian brothers and sisters around the world today who are celebrating a different feast — of sorts. They are celebrating well, Ishtar, the Easter celebration, which some people attribute to the resurrection of Jesus. That is the biblical reason I guess, that people like to provide in order to demonstrate the “validity” of what they are doing. People are

enjoying their Easter baskets and Easter eggs. They're enjoying — unfortunately their great big ham feast at the dinner table today because of things that have been taught them and things that they believe.

We tend to think in our circles that they misunderstand the scriptures; and in part, that is true. They do misunderstand the scriptures and what Yeshua came to accomplish on our behalf; to set us free. Not from his Father's laws, but from the man-made traditions and the man-made laws that have been enacted by people who take upon themselves, authority to do such things. So the title of my message today is:

By What Authority Are You Doing These Things? And Who Gave You This Authority?

We're going to look at by what authority we are doing the things that we are doing here today and by what authority others are doing in the name of religion; in the name of God, in the name of "the Lord," in the name of the Almighty, to do the things that they are doing. And what they believe to be worship that is "acceptable" to YeHoVaH, or to "the Lord" as they would put it.

Of course you probably recognize this title, because it's something that Yeshua was asked by the Pharisees. In Matthew 21:23, it says that Yeshua entered the temple courts and while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him.

"By what authority are you doing these things?"

They asked.

"And who gave you this authority?"

So there's Yeshua, who had not been trained by the Rabbis or by the Herodians or by any other religious...

(Temporary audio technical difficulties.)

...How is that? Oh boy, the pressure's on. I have to be perfect. (Laughs) I'm good. Okay.

The Pharisees asked Yeshua this question. It was because of the authority that they had taken upon themselves to be leaders in Israel and to exert their own authority; their own power, their own control of the people. But Yeshua exhibited this authority. And the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the elders; they weren't too happy about this because Yeshua didn't belong to any of their

schools. He didn't get trained by them. They objected although it was hard to do so, because Yeshua did have authority and people recognized his authority. The Pharisees, in trying to intimidate him, asked him:

“By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?”

Let's talk about authority. What is authority? I just looked it up on an online dictionary just to have some thoughts that we could ponder on what authority is. The first definition of authority is “the power to give orders or to make decisions.” Many people have authority to give orders. Typically somebody who has the authority to make decisions and to give orders was handed down that authority by somebody above them — somebody of greater authority.

Another idea about what authority is, is the power or right to direct or control someone or something. That kind of goes along with giving orders and making decisions — controlling people. In other words, setting the agenda. Authority figures set the agenda and typically do set their own agenda or an agenda that is in congruence with whatever their goals or aspirations are.

Third is the confident quality of someone who knows a lot about something or who is respected or obeyed by other people. There are lots of types of authorities. There are authorities of people who have intense training in an area, like doctors, lawyers; pretty much any occupation. Somebody who has a lot of knowledge or understanding about something which most people don't have; that person is considered to be an authority. And also a quality that makes something seem true or real. This is important because if a so-called “expert” in something isn't convincing in his arguments, then that doesn't seem to be true or real. No one will recognize somebody as an authority who presents information or who presents himself as an authority but who doesn't seem to know what he is talking about.

Let's talk about the authority of YeHoVaH. Let's start at the top. I ask the question:

“What gives YeHoVaH authority to direct and command mankind?”

That's kind of an easy one and we can go through a couple of things here. First of all, He is the maker of all. That kind of puts Him at the top doesn't it, of the authority structure? If a person created all things and set everything in place, then by virtue of His ability to do what no one else in the universe can do, He has authority over His universe; over His created beings.

He is mightier than the gods of Egypt. This is what we have been talking about since last night. He came in fulfillment of promises made to Abraham that He was coming to demonstrate

His power over the gods of Egypt and that He is superior to all of the so-called gods that mankind makes up and worships and bows down to. He does that by overthrowing each of the gods of Egypt through those ten plagues that we talked about last night. He's mightier than the gods of Egypt; which makes Him somewhat of an authority, doesn't it?

He is able to keep His promises. We all say things and do things. We usually have good intentions about what we say we're going to do. Sometimes we fail to be able to live up to our word and to our promises. But YeHoVaH is faithful and He never fails to keep His promises. People misunderstand when they expect blessings from YeHoVaH and they think that YeHoVaH has failed — and often we'll get that thrown in our face.

“Where is your God? Why isn't He taking care of you?”

The truth of the matter is that He's not failing to keep His promises, because He promises blessings — all sorts of blessings across the board to those who are obedient to His covenant. But He also promises curses and negative things that will happen when we fail to obey His commandments. In either case, He is keeping His promises. If things are going badly for us, one of the reasons for that would be because we have failed to keep His commandments and to be faithful to Him.

He is obligated by His own word to keep His promises by sending curses our way in order to wake us up and to stir us to repentance so that we begin to obey all of His commandments. Then we'll be able to receive all of the blessings that He has promised.

In Deuteronomy 5:15, it also describes this authority that YeHoVaH has. It says — you're familiar with this. It is part of the fourth commandment.

“Remember that you were slaves in Mitzrayim [Egypt]...”

I am reading this because of what day this is.

“And that YeHoVaH your Elohim brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore YeHoVaH your Elohim has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.”

What this verse is telling us is that He has authority to command us to keep the Sabbath day holy by virtue of the fact that He is the one that rescued us and our ancestors from the clutches of Pharaoh and slavery that they experienced in Mitzrayim.

These are some of the points about the authority of YeHoVaH. Clearly YeHoVaH is the ultimate authority over all things and over all of His creation. Let's talk now about the authority of Yeshua, because Yeshua came in his Father's name. His authority was recognized by the people. The example I give here is Matthew 7:28-29. This is just after he had finished what we know of as "the sermon on the mount." There he described in quite a bit of detail, how he had come not to destroy, but to fulfill the Torah.

He goes on and point after point after point, describes the Torah and the prophets' issue as the walk of faith. But then he takes those simple, straight-forward commandments and takes them a step further into the spiritual realm. He explains to us that it is not enough just to obey the surface or the most obvious interpretation of a commandment. But we have to look a little bit deeper and understand that God is looking at the heart and the intention when He gave these commandments.

The people recognized as he went point after point after point, that this man (unlike the scribes and Pharisees) spoke with authority. This authority that Yeshua had — he describes in the great commission as he is about ready to ascend into heaven. It says that Yeshua came to them (to his disciples) and he said:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Yeshua describes here, the authority that has been given to him. It is not a limited kind of authority at all, but all authority in heaven and on earth. Yeshua was given this authority because he had pleased the Father and had done the will of the Father in every aspect of his ministry. Also what authority did Yeshua have? We can summarize it with several points here.

First of all, he had dominion over all creation (Genesis 1:28, Psalm 8). Each one of us has a certain amount of this authority. We have been given dominion at creation, dominion over the animals; over the birds and the fish and everything that walks the earth. Mankind was given this authority. Psalm 8 also describes this same authority. Let me read it to you; the relevant portion of Psalm 8. It says:

“You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings, and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over all the works of your hands, and you put everything under his feet. All flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the seas, all that swim the paths of the seas.”

And our response to this is:

“Oh YeHoVaH our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!”

So He has given us this authority over the creation on earth. And the authority that Yeshua had when he spoke of all authority, includes this authority over all things on the earth. Yeshua demonstrated that by walking on the water. He had authority over gravity; I guess you would say, because he didn't sink in the water. He had authority over the storms when there were storms over the Sea of Galilee. He calmed them with just a spoken word.

He had authority over all disease and sickness as he healed the people of *all* of their diseases, it said. He has authority and demonstrated his authority over the spirit world; over unclean spirits and demon spirits and he cast demons out of individuals. A verse that describes the authority he had over sickness and disease would be Matthew 9:35. It says that:

“Yeshua went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.”

His authority over disease and sickness was not limited and that is a good word for us today, because nothing has changed. He still has authority over every disease and sickness, and by his stripes we are healed. When we claim that and when we believe that and when we walk pleasing to the Father; claiming this healing, the scripture says that he has already done this for us. He has authority over the demon world and authority to forgive us of sins.

This is an authority that Elohim alone has been able to exercise. Yeshua — a man was brought before him; a paralytic. They brought this man before him; evidently upon a cot. Obviously they wanted this man to be healed. Yeshua said:

“Your sins are forgiven.”

The Pharisees weren't real happy to hear that because that was kind of — in their thinking it was a claim to some divine prerogative; which in fact he had. But they didn't believe that Yeshua had that divine prerogative. So Yeshua said:

“Which is easier, to forgive sins or to say ‘rise and walk?’”

Then he looked at the man and he said that:

“In order that you might believe that the Son of man has the authority to forgive sins...”

He spoke to the man and said:

“...Rise and walk.”

So he demonstrated it and of course the man got up and walked. He demonstrated that the Son of man Yeshua, has authority to forgive sins. There isn't anything that Yeshua doesn't have control over or have authority over.

Now I want to step back into the law, the Torah, and take a look at the authority that YeHoVaH has given to His people. He called His people to be a nation. He delivered to them, an inheritance. Every tribe, every clan among those tribes, and every family among those clans was given an allotment, an inheritance; a piece of land so that they could begin to develop their new life in the Promised Land.

There had to be a system set up where people could bring their disputes and their claims before judges to settle their disputes between people. This instruction is given in Deuteronomy 17:8-12. It says:

“If cases come before your courts that are too difficult for you to judge, whether bloodshed, lawsuits or assaults, take them to the place YeHoVaH your Elohim will choose. Go to the priests, who are Levites, and to the judge who is in office at that time. Inquire of them and they will give you the verdict. You must act according to the decisions they give you at the place YeHoVaH will choose. Be careful to do everything they direct you to do. Act according to the law (Torah) they teach you and the decisions (mishpat) they give you. Do not turn aside from what they tell you, to the right or to the left. The man who shows contempt for the judge or for the priest who stands ministering

there to YeHoVaH your Elohim must be put to death. You must purge the evil from Yisrael (Israel)."

YeHoVaH set up this system where disputes can be settled. It was like with Moses. Moses had elders selected that could take the easier cases. Any of the more difficult cases, they would bring to Mosheh (Moses) himself. He was more familiar with and more in-tune with the Spirit of the commandments (Mishpat); the judgments of the Torah. He was able to discern the correct interpretation; the correct judgment in those difficult cases. So YeHoVaH set up this system where now the priests and the Levites took on that role of being judges in Israel.

I think it's pretty clear from the words. I underscored the word "Torah" and the word "Mishpat" in this instruction so that we could see that it's on the basis of YeHoVaH's Torah; His instructions, His *mishpatim*, which are the decision or judgment portions of the law. The priests, who are supposed to be experts in the law; the priests were given this responsibility of being judges. They were to judge on the basis of Elohim's laws; not by their own thinking or their own preferences or opinions. They were to judge the people on the basis of Elohim's laws.

Now, this got a little bit twisted when it came to the Pharisees, and we see that in the "oral" Torah of modern Orthodox Judaism; especially by the Rabbis. They have taken upon themselves, an authority; probably usurping an authority that didn't rightfully belong to them. There are issues of trying to discern who really is qualified as a priest or as a judge, and that is a debate for another day. But the Pharisees took upon themselves this idea that they were to be obeyed by the people, regardless of the fact that they had strayed away from the commandments of YeHoVaH. They had created their own "oral Torah," and their own man-made laws and doctrines which often conflicted with the written instructions that YeHoVaH had given.

So now the priests and the Levites, who in the days of Yeshua were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the teachers of the law, the elders and even Herodians — they would point to this portion of the Torah and say:

"See, YeHoVaH has given us this authority, so you have to obey what we tell you to do."

Thereby they are exerting their own authority based upon their own laws and not upon the laws of YeHoVaH. This is a twisted and a perverted authority; nevertheless, an authority that the people were somewhat obligated to obey, because there was always that threat of being excommunicated from the community, from the synagogue or whatever. By virtue of the fact

that they were the leading religious figures in Israel at that time, people submitted themselves to the authority of the scribes and the Pharisees — the “hypocrites,” to borrow an expression from Yeshua.

The reason I bring this up is because there are real authorities that exercise authority in the world today (even as back in that day), that derive their authority from something other than from YeHoVaH.

Matthew 23:2-3 *“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Mosheh’s seat.”*

This is a demonstration that Yeshua was acknowledging the fact that the Pharisees and the scribes and the Sadducees were exercising a certain kind of authority. Now they claim to sit in Mosheh’s seat. They did in fact sit in that judgment seat, which they called Mosheh’s seat, and make judgments. But they were not based upon (like I said before), YeHoVaH’s instructions and Mishpatim.

You are all familiar with the way the typical English Bible translation reads.

“So you must obey them...”

Yeshua allegedly said.

“...to do everything they tell you.”

But we know that that would be absurd. That’s impossible because Yeshua in every other place as recorded in the gospels, had a problem with what the Pharisees and the Sadducees were teaching. In fact he was contrary to just about everything they said and did because they were always acting in their own interest and not in the interest of Elohim. Yeshua was advocating obedience to Mosheh, not obedience to the Pharisees and scribes and Sadducees. So whatever Mosheh says is what we’re supposed to do. But don’t do — the last part of this passage is:

“But do not do what they do...”

The Pharisees.

“...for they do not practice what they preach.”

They don’t do what they are supposed to do.

Now these are some characteristics of any false religion. I've pointed out the false religion of the Pharisees and the Sadducees — the Sanhedrin as it were, in the days of Yeshua. But we can recognize any false religion by these characteristics.

- They reject the laws and right-rulings of YeHoVaH

In other words, they don't advocate walking in the righteous commandments that YeHoVaH has given. They exercise their control by using their own commandments and traditions and man-made doctrines and teachings to exert authority over the people and to tell them what to do.

- False religious systems also claim authority to change, nullify or add to or diminish Yah's laws, as well as rejecting them.

These two kind of go hand-in-hand. They might claim to be doing God's will and not rejecting what God has to say. But in actual practice, they exercise an authority to change His laws and to nullify and to add and subtract from them.

- They also have their own holy days.

This is a part of what the prophets said would happen. Even the Torah itself says that this would happen — that they would stray from the things that were established by Elohim, to establish their own ways and laws and holidays and so forth.

- They also proclaim a new way to walk with and to please the Almighty.

They are suggesting that the teachings that they bring to the table are what really please the Almighty. Now how do they get this authority and who gave them this authority? If it was fair game to ask Yeshua by what authority are you doing these things, we can throw it back in their face and say, well, by what authority you have been given — are you able to do these things? This is what we need to ask of any religion or any system that purports to be doing "God's will" on earth.

"By what authority?"

The Christian Church for many centuries let's say, has claimed an authority that has been given to them "by God." That authority (they say), was given to Peter and to his successors. We are all familiar with this doctrine of the Catholic Church. So I would ask, does the successor to Peter have the authority to make and to change law and direct and command people? They would say yes, that they have the authority to make and change law because of what was said to Peter.

Here is an official statement of the Catholic Church. A decretal — I don't even know how to pronounce this, the Latin (epistolae, decretals). Decretals are letters of the Pope that formulate decisions in ecclesiastical (Church) law of the Catholic Church. One such decretal says this:

“The Pope has power to change times, to abrogate laws, and to dispense with all things even the precepts of Christ” (Decretal, de tranlatic episcop).”

So the Catholic Church — the Pope claims to have this authority based upon something we're going to get into in some detail in just a minute here. It's important to see that this is one of the most *obvious* marks of a false religion — **when somebody or a group or when a religious system claims authority to overrule what God has said.**

We know that in Deuteronomy 8:3, a very important statement is given to us. It says that the children of Israel were brought out into the wilderness and deprived of food so that they would come to understand that *man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of Elohim*. It's the words that proceed out of the mouth of Elohim that have authority. They are life-giving. It is not what man comes up with and the decrees and laws and decisions that man enacts upon his own thinking and his own opinion — that can give life. Those things all lead to death. But it's Elohim's words spoken that bring life. They created all things. They bring life to all things and they sustain and restore all things.

This is the audacity of the universal — the so-called “universal” and Catholic Church and the claim of the Pope. Here's a couple more statements from the Catholic Church, just to show you that this isn't an isolated statement. Henry Tuberville D.D., in *An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine* (p. 58) questioned:

“How prove you that the church hath power to command feasts and holy days?”

The answer is:

“By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday.”

They changed the Sabbath into Sunday. They did it by their own authority, not by any authority that is written in the scriptures. We're going to look at another statement or two about that. But because of the fact that they changed the Sabbath to Sunday and transferred or so-called transferred the solemnity or the holiness of the Sabbath to Sunday the first day of the week; and by the fact that “everyone” accepts that and walks in that, they acknowledge that authority. They

submit to that change. It is a demonstration of the fact that they have “power” to command feasts and holy days. Another statement by James Cardinal Gibbons in *The Faith of our Fathers* (88th ed., pp. 89):

“But you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday...”

Truth — That’s true.

“...The scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.”

So here just blatantly and outright they admit that the Bible teaches that the Sabbath is the holy day that Elohim has given to us. And yet they sanctify a different day; a day that the Bible has nothing to say about. Another by Stephen Keenan in *A Doctrinal Catechism* (3rd ed., p. 174).

Question:

“Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?”

The answer to this is:

*“Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her — she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, **a change for which there is no scriptural authority.**”*

They are not even trying to hide this fact that they don’t agree with the scriptures or the things that proceeded out of the mouth of Elohim. They believe — but do they believe? They assert, but I’m not sure how much they really believe it. Maybe they believe it. But they assert the belief that God has given them this authority, much like the Pharisees asserted by twisting the Deuteronomy 17 passage to claim that Elohim has given them authority to make judgments; to change laws, to control the people by their own decrees and edicts.

Like I said, this is a typical characteristic of people that are not walking in the ways of Yah, but are claiming this “authority” to do these things and to change the word of Elohim. Another one. I think this might be the last one. From another letter written by James Cardinal Gibbons.

“It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her. AND THE ACT...”

This act of changing the Sabbath to Sunday is what we are talking about:

“...AND THE ACT IS A MARK of ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters.”

In other words, the fact that the Catholic Church changed the sanctity of the Sabbath to Sunday, and the fact that “everyone” accepts it and is controlled by it, is a mark of her “power” and her “authority.” We all know that there are other marks. There are signs that Elohim gives to His people to demonstrate the fact that He is the one who sets us apart as His people.

I’m talking about the Sabbath. The Sabbath itself is that sign. The keeping of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is another sign. I think it is in Exodus 13 that we are submitting to Elohim’s laws and that we are His people. This is another kind of a mark. This is a mark of a religious system which demonstrates who they are and their power and authority in religious matters.

“What authority do Protestants have?”

We’ve been talking about what the Pope says and what the Catholic theologians say about the enactments and decrees of the Catholic Church.

“What authority do Protestants recognize?”

This is another opinion of a Catholic in *Our Sunday Visitor*, issued Feb. 5, 1950.

“Protestants accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change...But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that in accepting the Bible, in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the Church, the Pope.”

If you ask most Protestants, they would have no idea that they are worshipping on Sunday because the Pope made that change. They seem to think that it has something to do with what the scriptures teach; that Jesus rose on Sunday, which the scriptures never say; and that Jesus did away with the law, which the scriptures clearly refute. So they are given these reasons or excuses from their own teachers about why they do Sunday. I think a lot of Protestants really don’t

understand why they are doing the Sunday worship. They are led to believe it is one reason, but it is actually another — the fact that they are submitting to the authority of the Pope.

I think that if they came to understand that, it might be a little easier for them to transition back to Yah's holy day. That is because Protestants typically have a protesting attitude; which is how they got their name. If that information became more widely circulated and known, we might see some changes in that situation.

Now here's the scripture that the church gives for claiming this authority, and it's Matthew 16. We're going to spend most of the rest of our time here talking about Matthew 16.

Matthew 16:18-19 (KJV) "And I say unto thee, 'That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'"

This binding and loosing is clearly a reference to some sort of authority to enact or to diminish something, and we'll look at it in some detail. But it's about exercising authority to bind and loose — to make decisions.

On a cursory reading of this passage, it kind of sounds like Peter might be this rock that Jesus said he would build his church upon. But we're going to see that this is not the case. Yet this is the claim of the Catholic Church. For nineteen hundred and some years, this has been thought to be the correct interpretation of this passage. This is where the Catholic Church derives its authority — by teaching people that Peter was the instrument upon which the church was built and that all of the successors of Peter, who became known as "Papas" or Popes also follow up with that authority. That authority was "passed down" from Peter to the next Peter, whoever that was, and on down the line through all the Popes throughout history up to the present one. Who is that, Frances?

This is the scripture that is used by the Catholics to exert this authority that they believe they have. Here is the problem. Most people don't understand like I said, why they are doing the things that they do. They think that by doing Christmas and by having the Easter baskets this afternoon and their candies and all of the different things that have a different source, that Christians believe they are doing it because "Jesus set us free" from whatever — from the

commandments and the instructions not to follow after how the pagans worship their gods. So they feel this freedom to do whatever they want because doesn't Jesus of course cleanse and sanctify everything? I mean we can even bless the pork chop in Jesus' name. In their thinking, that makes it good to eat.

What we want to do is that we want to look at this passage and go through it and show what each of these statements mean for when we are confronted with somebody who claims this authority (to do Easter and Christmas and to worship on Sunday). They claim it because Jesus "gave" Peter this authority to bind and to loose as he pleases. We need to have a responsible answer to everyone that asks us about the way we see things and why we do what we do; why we are doing this Feast of Unleavened Bread today.

I want to walk through this passage and present the background to some of these important issues that are dealt with just in these couple verses so that we can understand what authority Yeshua *did* give to Peter and to the other apostles. And also so that we can understand who this rock is that he would build his church upon. Here is the whole passage in Matthew 16:13-16 — Peter's confession:

"When Yeshua came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' They replied, 'Some say Yochanan [John] the Immerser; others say Eliyahu [Elijah]; and still others, Yermiyahu [Jeremiah] or one of the prophets.' 'But what about you?' he asked. 'Who do you say I am?' Shimon Kepha [Simon Peter] answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living Elohim.'"

Now, although the Sanhedrin were made up of Pharisees, Sadducees, Elders and were unable to correctly discern the true identity of Yeshua, Peter had a clear perception of who he was. That is because he was shown these things by the Holy Spirit. The Sanhedrin refused to acknowledge the authority of the written Torah of Mosheh [Moses] as we have already discussed a little bit. And they were subsequently blinded to the truth of Yeshua's identity. But Kepha had an open mind and heart and he was ready to receive the truth.

It's Peter, it's Shimon Kepha in this state of being in touch and listening to the voice of Elohim and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, who was able to make this statement:

"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living Elohim."

Matthew 16:16-19 “Yeshua replied, ‘Blessed are you, Shimon son of Yonah,[Jonah] for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Kepha, and on this rock I will build my assembly, and the gates of Hades [Hell] will not overcome it.’”

There is a word play here. Greek New Testament scholars like to talk about this. This kind of plays into the idea that Peter is actually the rock that Jesus was going to build his church upon. In the Greek you notice that the word “Peter” is actually “Petros,” and the word “rock” in Hebrew is “petra.” There seems to be a word play with Peter and the rock that Messiah would build a church on. So they interpret this to mean that Peter was the rock. Since Peter is a rock, and since Jesus would build on a rock, then “clearly” in their view, Peter is the foundation of the church, Right? He’s not the rock upon which the church was built? (Laughter) Hallelujah.

When you look at the Hebrew Matthew, there is a different word play. The Hebrew word for “stone” is “even” and the Hebrew word for “I will build” is “evneh.” And so in the Hebrew manuscripts of Matthew’s gospel, Yeshua said to Peter:

“You are a stone [even] and I will build [evneh] on you, my house of prayer.”

There is this play on words between “stone” and “build.” The word “Peter” does not occur in the Hebrew Matthew. The word play is not on “Peter” and “rock” as some think. The name “Peter” does not even occur in his statement. Nevertheless there is still an indication that Yeshua was talking to and about Peter. Even in the Hebrew it says about Peter, that:

“I will build upon you, my house of prayer.”

How do we deal with that? I don’t know, let’s see. Let’s see what the slideshow says. As we break this down, one of the important rules of biblical interpretation is — and Arthur has pointed this out many times.

Ask the right questions of the text.

If we're not asking the right questions; if we're not even thinking about what's being written, then we don't realize that there is a problem there in the way that we're reading it and interpreting it. We'll never come to an answer. So we have to think carefully on what we are reading in the scriptures. And we ask questions — questions that on the surface aren't answered. Here are some questions that we need to ask of this text.

- Who is the rock?

It is assumed that Peter is the rock because of that alleged word play in the Greek. In fact, Matthew wasn't originally written in Greek, so that word play shouldn't be in play in our thinking. So:

- Who is the rock that is being spoken of here?
- Did Peter think that he was the rock?

What we want to do is we want to look at the other things that Peter said and wrote to find out if he indicated in any way that he thought that he was the rock upon which the church was built.

- What is the assembly or church?

An assumption is made that the church that Jesus was going to build his house upon or his assembly upon was something that was newly created on *Shavuot*, on *Pentecost*. So we want to look at:

- What is the assembly?
- Did the prophets speak of the building of his assembly?

We find out in the sermon on the mount and in many of the other teachings of Yeshua that Yeshua was always affirming and upholding the Torah and the prophets. He said that they were not going to be done away with; he had come to fulfill them. What about this thing that he said to Peter?

- Do the Torah or the prophets affirm or explain in some manner what Yeshua was referring to?

We want to look at that.

- What did Peter think that Yeshua would build?
- Is there any indication in what Peter wrote, that he understood these words that Yeshua said to him?
- What authority do Yeshua's disciples have?

That is because he talked about the binding and the loosing and so forth.

- So what authority was he giving to Peter?

I would insert also to the other disciples who were listening to the Holy Spirit and who would come to conclusions that man had not given them, but the Holy Spirit — the voice of Elohim had given them.

We want to look at these questions and try to find answers in the Torah and the prophets. Ya'acov [Jacob] says that YeHoVaH is the rock. This is from Genesis 49 when he was blessing his sons. He said to Yosef [Joseph]:

Genesis 49:24-25 “But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed limber, because of the hand of the Mighty One of Ya'acov, because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Yisrael, because of your father's Elohim who helps you, because of the Almighty, who blesses you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies below, blessings of the breast and womb.”

Here Ya'acov/Jacob is asserting that the rock of Yisrael is Elohim himself. It is YeHoVaH who is the rock. Who is the rock in the song of Moses? This is from Deuteronomy 32:4:

“He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful Elohim who does no wrong, upright and just is he.”

Again, Elohim is the rock spoken of in scriptures. We really want to find all the answers to our questions from the scriptures. It's not good enough to make assumptions and suppositions about who we think. We need to find evidence and proof in the scriptures to back up our claims and to correctly interpret scripture. Yeshurun is another name for Israel.

Deuteronomy 32:15 “Yeshurun grew fat and kicked; filled with food, he became heavy and sleek. He abandoned the Elohim who made him and rejected the Rock his Savior.”

Again Elohim is referred to as the rock. In the Psalms we find out who the rock is.

Psalms 18:2 “YeHoVaH is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my Elohim is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

And later on in the same Psalm 18:

Psalms 18:31 “For who is Elohim besides YeHoVaH? And who is the Rock except our Elohim?”

Hallelujah. Who is the rock? Another Psalm describes who the rock is.

Psalms 19:14 “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, YeHoVaH, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

And then from the song that Laura sang [in worship today]:

Psalms 95:1 “Come, let us sing for joy to YeHoVaH; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.”

The scriptures have in fact, many other references to YeHoVaH as the rock. Clearly and exclusively, the rock of scripture is YeHoVaH. Now in the prophets in Isaiah 8, it tells us again. This is important because this scripture is something that Yeshua used to refer to himself. Here it is.

Isaiah 8:13-14 “YeHoVaH Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread, and he will be a sanctuary; but for both houses of Yisrael he will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall. And for the people of Yerushalayim he will be a trap and a snare.”

Psalm 118 tells us what rock is to be the head stone. Another very important passage when we’re trying to understand is when Yeshua said:

“On this rock I will build my church (or assembly)...”

He is referring to some foundational piece of his house, okay? This Psalm describes that for us.

Psalm 118:21-23 (KJV) “I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”

The head stone of the corner. This is the most important rock if you will, in the foundation that lays a building, okay?

“This is YeHoVaH’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.”

- Does Peter think that he is the rock?

It’s pretty clear up to this point that the rock of scripture is YeHoVaH and that YeHoVaH’s Messiah had become the head corner; the head stone of the corner. So Messiah Yeshua is that piece that YeHoVaH has laid down to build and to fulfill the promises that were made through the prophets. We’ll talk about those promises in just a moment. So anyway, the question is:

- Does Peter think that he is the rock?

This is from 1 Peter 2:4-8 (quoting Isaiah 8:14). We said we wanted to go into the New Testament into what Peter either said or wrote. There is something very important recorded in the book of Acts about what Peter said. Then there is the book of 1 Peter and 2 Peter which he wrote. Here is what Peter thinks about the rock and about whether or not he thinks he himself is the rock. Peter says:

“As you come to him, the living stone — rejected by men but chosen by Elohim and precious to him — you also, like living stones, are being built...”

A key phrase: being built.

“...into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Elohim through Yeshua Messiah. For in scripture it says: ‘See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.’ Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, ‘the stone the builders rejected has become the capstone,’ and, ‘A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.’ They stumble because they disobey the message — which is also what they were destined for.”

So Peter, in his own letter that was distributed among the disbursed of Israel — it says to the twelve tribes of Israel in the heading of his letter. He describes this living stone. And he describes this same living stone as a stone the builders rejected and a stone and rock that makes them fall. So he’s using the words “stone” and “rock” to refer to Messiah again. But interestingly, he talks about this thing being built; this spiritual house that’s being built on

account of the work of Messiah as living stones. He calls his peers living stones — not of course claiming himself to be “the” rock that Yeshua was speaking of. But that Yeshua himself is that rock upon which this spiritual house is being built. And we are being built. That’s another reference to how Peter understood the statement about:

“And on this rock I will build...my church.”

Here’s the building aspect. Here is Peter telling us what he understood by that statement Yeshua made to him — that this spiritual house being built is based upon the cornerstone of the rock that is Yeshua; the one that was rejected. But that we are all like living stones. So the comparison of Peter the rock to the building upon the rock was not accidental and it is not mistaken. There is an aspect in which we are all living stones. We are all part of that foundation. We are part of that building up of a spiritual house. Yeshua was referring to this spiritual house that he was going to build up upon Peter; and really upon all of the living stones. We see also that he himself, and not Peter was the rock and the foundation of that building. There is Peter explaining who the rock is and his interpretation of what Yeshua said to him.

Paul also declares that Messiah was the rock, from 1 Corinthians 10:4.

“They drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them and that rock was Messiah.”

- What is the assembly? Or what is the church that Yeshua is referring to?

I think I only have this one slide. I mean we could take a half hour talking about the church and the assembly and who that is, and relating it back to the House of Israel and so forth. The Greek word is *ekkleesia*. You’ve probably heard it a thousand times in sermons. The Hebrew scriptures use two words that translate as “congregation” and “assembly” or even “church” in certain translations. It is the word *kehilah*. It is usually translated as “assembly,” but could be translated as “church.” There is another word, *edah*, also translated as “congregation, assembly, multitude, people, swarm.”

These two words are virtually synonymous. But every time you see the word “kehilah” in Hebrew scriptures; when it gets translated into the Greek Septuagint (which is just a Greek translation of the Old Testament), the word “ekkleesia” by some strange coincidence is the word that is used to translate “kehilah.”

New Testament teachers have changed the thinking of a lot of people by inserting a new word as the translation of this word “ekkleesia.” By saying “church” instead of “congregation” or “assembly,” they can separate what is taught in the Tanakh from what Jesus allegedly is teaching — this new thing, this new assembly, this new body that he was making up of “Jew” and “Gentile.” It is completely separate from Israel, so of course all of these theologies derive from this misinterpretation of this Greek word. I dare say it’s an intentional misinterpretation, because theology often dictates how we translate and understand scriptures. It is not as easy as reading it and saying:

“Oh, this is what it’s saying.”

Our theology, our doctrine often controls our thinking and the way we interpret a thing from scriptures. So I think that this was intentional; that the word *ekkleesia* was translated into the English word “church” in order to lead people in the direction of believing a theology which says that Jesus created this new body called “the church” and that he was not referring to Israel. Throughout the law and the prophets, Israel was the *kehilah*. It is referred to as the *kehilah* of Israel, or Elohim’s *kehilah* or whatever, in many different ways. But it is the assembly, the sons of Israel who come together to worship the Mighty One, YeHoVaH. That is the assembly that Yeshua was referring to, so long as we understand.

When we can understand and convince others that this church thing that Jesus talked about is not a new entity, then we can get a little bit of traction into explaining how what Yeshua was saying was in fulfillment of the promises made to Israel. So now there’s a transfer of connectivity from what was promised in the past and what Yeshua is now fulfilling in our time — in the time that he came and in our time as well.

- What house did the prophets say was to be built?

This is another important thing because Jesus said (allegedly) that he was going to build his church. In Ezekiel we find out what the prophets were foretelling that would happen on account of the fact that after David’s generation in the time — well actually it was in the time of Solomon. The twelve tribes split over a disagreement about who would be their next leader. They split into two different nations; actually two different houses. The Northern tribe which is the House of Ephraim; and the Southern tribe, which is the House of Judah. Another prophesy that you are familiar with is when Ezekiel says this:

Ezekiel 37:15-17 “The word of YeHoVaH came to me: ‘Son of man, take a stick of wood and write on it, belonging to Yehudah and the sons of Yisrael associated with him. Then take another stick of wood, and write on it, Ephraim’s stick, belonging to Yoseph and all the house of Yisrael associated with him. Join them together into one stick so that they will become one in your hand.’”

Ezekiel 37:18-19 “And when your countrymen ask you, ‘Won’t you tell us what you mean by this?’ say to them, ‘This is what Adonai YeHoVaH says: I am going to take the stick of Yoseph — which is in Ephraim’s hand — and of the Yisraelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Yehudah’s stick, making them a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand.’”

Now there are several of the prophets that talk about this same phenomenon of the two houses of Israel finally at some point in the future coming together as one. It says that there will be one king over them. They will be one nation with one king over them. It is referring to the days of Messiah. This is the work that Messiah came to accomplish. It is to bring those two houses back together because they are all Elohim’s people. This is what Ezekiel offers to us in terms of what this house is that Yeshua came to build. The Messiah had to come and fulfill these prophecies. Here’s the rest of that passage.

Ezekiel 37:20-22 “Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on and say to them, ‘This is what Adonai YeHoVaH says: I will take the sons of Yisrael out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel.’”

So this is the work of Messiah. Now Amos adds this very important detail. This one is really significant because Peter referred to this prophecy. And of course we want to find out what Peter had in mind — how Peter interpreted the words of Yeshua about building upon this rock, his church. Here is what Amos says:

Amos 9:9-11 (KJV) “For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, ‘The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us. In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen,

and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.”

Here is another promise of the prophets that the Tabernacle of David which has fallen, will be rebuilt. There is that concept of building that Yeshua was referring to. That Tabernacle of David is the House of Israel; which had split. The tent had fallen. The people had split. They continued to go their own ways. Then they were disbursed among the nations. Here the promise is that he will close up the breaches of the Tabernacle of David and raise up his ruins.

In other words, it is parallel to what is said by the other prophets; that since all of Israel (both houses) had been scattered to the four corners of the earth, one day he would bring them back together. These prophecies would all be fulfilled in that event — in the bringing back of the sons of Israel who were scattered and rejoining them as one nation in the hand of the Almighty. So because the Tabernacle of David had fallen, the promise is that:

“I will build it as in the days of old.”

On Shavuot, Peter referred to this time when the Spirit would be poured out. But this is what was spoken about through the prophet Yoel (Joel), Peter says.

Acts 2:16-18 “‘And in the last days it will be,’ Elohim says, ‘that I will pour out my Spirit on all people, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.’”

When we look at the passage that Peter was quoting from, he left out an important part. It’s Yoel 2:32-3:1. It says:

“And so it will happen that everyone who calls on the name of YeHoVaH will be delivered...”

Here is a hint that now the Gentiles are being focused upon to bring them into the fold — that everyone that calls upon the name of YeHoVaH will be delivered.

“...For on Mount Zion and in Yerushalayim there will be those who survive, just as YeHoVaH has promised; the remnant will be those whom YeHoVaH will call. For look! In those days and at that time I will return the exiles to Yehudah and Yerushalayim.”

Here is a reference to the exiles — those who have been cast out of the land and scattered to the four corners of the earth. And in those days He's going to bring them back together — bring them back to Yehudah and Yerushalayim; the place where YeHoVaH's presence is to dwell. And they will become one stick in His hand (to borrow Ezekiel's expression).

James explains what Peter taught. This is in Acts 15. Remember that in Acts 15 they are discussing this issue of what to require of the Gentiles who are coming into the faith. They had a big discussion about this and James is the spokesperson explaining the conclusion and the agreed upon council of the apostles and the elders. It says that James says this. Simeon (there's Peter) — now he's referring to something that Peter brought to the table, some understanding that Peter brought in. And this is also important to understand what Peter understood of Yeshua's words to him in Matthew chapter 16.

Acts 15:14-18 “Simeon has explained how Elohim first concerned himself to select from among the Gentiles, a people for his name. The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written,”

Then there is this quote from Amos chapter 9; the one we just read about, David's fallen tent.

“After this I will return, and I will rebuild the fallen tent of David; I will rebuild its ruins and restore it, so that the rest of humanity may seek YeHoVaH, namely, all the Gentiles I have called to be my own,” says YeHoVaH, who makes these things known from long ago.”

Peter was actually teaching them that this phenomenon of the Gentiles coming into the faith was a fulfillment of the prophecy of the rebuilding of David's fallen tent. It was allowing the exiles and the Gentiles as well, to come into the fold. This is what was being rebuilt in the last days. The rebuilding that Yeshua was enacting was the rebuilding of David's fallen tent; by bringing the Gentiles into the fold.

Is that clear that Peter understood Yeshua's words to him to mean that Yeshua was fulfilling the prophecies to rebuild David's fallen tent? Not to build this new thing called “the church,” but to fulfill prophecy and to bring back the two houses of Israel together so they could be one nation in one land with one king over them. Hallelujah.

I think that is what we have to present. I know this is kind of difficult and detailed. It is not like when we talk to people who have this other understanding about the authority that Peter was

given. It is not going to be an easy task to just walk them through all of these scriptures. It is going to take some patience and some working of the Spirit. If people are really interested in the truth and are interested in knowing what the scriptures are teaching, maybe they'll listen. This is what the scripture is teaching. This is the way that we are to understand Matthew 16 and this confession of Peter and the authority that Yeshua was giving to Peter.

So finishing up that passage in Matthew 16:18-19, Yeshua goes on to say this:

“And I will give unto thee keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

We have here a description of authority. Here is the authority part of it. It is not that Peter built the church — or Yeshua was going to build the church upon Peter; which it really doesn't mean. But Yeshua was going to rebuild the fallen House of Israel upon that confession of listening to the Holy Spirit and understanding who the Maschiach [Messiah] truly is. He is the Son of the living Elohim. And based upon a confession; that kind of a confession, the right kind of relationship with the Almighty and listening to His Holy Spirit, a certain authority was being given or actually regiven to the disciples; to the apostles. They are who claim this profession or this confession that Yeshua is the promised Messiah. So he says unto them:

Matthew 16:18-19 *“And I will give unto thee keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”*

Now, this is a scripture from Isaiah (Yeshayahu) that talks about the keys of the House of David. Because the previous — Yeshua is promising keys of the kingdom of heaven. What is the kingdom of heaven if it's not the rejoining of the two houses and the Messianic Age on earth with the House of Israel living back in its own land? That's the kingdom of heaven.

What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven? Well, this is a reference to the keys or the key to the House of David. We're talking about the same thing here.

Yeshayahu 22:20-22 *“At that time I will summon my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiyah. I will put your robe on him, tie your belt around him, and transfer our authority to him. He will become a protector of the residents of Yerushalayim and of the people of Yehudah. I*

will place the key to the house of David on his shoulder. When he opens the door, no one can close it; when he closes the door, no one can open it.”

That speaks of authority — the authority to rule, the authority to judge.

The key of the House of David was being put on Eliakim’s shoulder as kind of a shadow picture of what happens with Messiah receiving the keys to the House of David; but also this authority that the disciples were now being given. Yeshua gave his authority to his disciples to perform all the works that he did — to forgive sins; to do all the things that he did.

In the book of Revelation, we read about the key of David again, and shutting and opening and that kind of thing.

Revelation 3:7 “To the angel of the congregation in Philadelphia write the following: ‘this is the solemn pronouncement of the Set-apart One, the True One, who holds the key of David, who opens doors no one can shut, and shuts doors no one can open.’”

Clearly this is a reference to Yeshua himself who has this authority and the key to David. The “key” is the authority to rule; to make judgments. That’s what the key of David is.

The “keys of the reign of the heavens” about which Yeshua spoke to Peter, is the authority given to the disciples of Yeshua to manage and reign over his body by the use of the rules (Hebrew: *chukot*) and right-rulings (Hebrew: *mishpatim*) of the Torah. These tools (“keys”) are the means by which to instruct and manage the body of Messiah — because **the law hasn’t changed, has it?!**

The law was given to Israel in which to walk; in which to legislate and to make judgments and decisions in disputes, and that hasn’t changed! In the body of Messiah, we have these same tools — these same keys to the kingdom. These keys are the way that the kingdom is to be administered. So the laws and the judgments of the Torah is what Israel is to use. They are life to Israel. These are the keys to the reign of the heavens. They are the laws and judgments by which all of Israel is to live.

Let’s take just a moment. We’re almost finished here. Let’s take a moment to look at the Torah and what the scripture says about the Torah.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 6:1 “Now this is the commandment – the rules and right-rulings...”

Those are the words *chukot* and *mishpatim* I referred to in the previous statement; the rules and the right-rulings of the Torah.

“Now this is the commandment – the rules and right-rulings that YeHoVaH your Elohim instructed me to teach you so that you may carry them out in the land where you are headed.”

Is there any authority given to anyone? To Israel? To the judges? To Yeshua or to Yeshua’s disciples to change laws and rulings of Torah? Is there any authority to do that? Again, not to be overly repetitive, but Yeshua claimed exactly the opposite of that. He had not come to do away with the Torah or the prophets, but to fulfill them.

All false religions take upon themselves the authority to change God’s law, or to have as a leader — one who alone or a select group of people who can “properly” interpret the law. Back to the law:

Devarim 4:1-2 “Now, Yisrael, pay attention to the rules and right-rulings I am about to teach you, so that you might live and go on to enter and take possession of the land that YeHoVaH, the Elohim of your ancestors, is giving you. Do not add a thing to what I command you nor subtract from it, so that you may keep the commandments of YeHoVaH your Elohim that I am delivering to you.”

Don’t add to it, don’t subtract from, or diminish it. That is the instruction of YeHoVaH. And yet we see all the false religions doing that very thing. They are adding to, they are subtracting from. In some cases they are nullifying the whole thing and creating their own set of law.

Devarim 33:4 “The Torah is Israel’s inheritance. Mosheh delivered to us an instruction, the Torah, an inheritance for the assembly (kehilah) of Ya’acov.”

Here the inheritance of the kehilah, the thing that Yeshua was referring to as something that he was going to build, is the instruction, the Torah.

Again is another connection between the church or assembly that Yeshua is going to build, and that authority that those who are involved in the building of that holy house would be able to wield as the way to settle disputes.

Devarim 12:32 “You must be careful to do everything that I am commanding you. Do not add to it or subtract from it!”

The Psalms describe the law in the same way. They are eternal. They are not to be done away with.

Psalm 119:89 “YeHoVaH, your instructions endure; they stand secure in heaven.”

Psalm 119:152 “Long ago I realized that you ordained your rules to last.”

Psalm 119:142 “Your justice endures, and your law is reliable.”

Now the binding and the loosing — this is the last piece of the puzzle to tie down and to explain. Yeshua said:

“Whatever you bind on earth shall be having been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loosen on earth shall be having been loosened in the heavens.”

This is a literal rendering of the Greek text, which is a complicated grammar; point of grammar in the Greek text.

“...and whatever you loosen on earth shall be having been loosened in the heavens.”

Usually English translators smooth that out a little bit so it’s a little easier to read because it’s like:

“What? What does that mean?”

It’s a periphrastic future perfect tense of the Greek text (if you really wanted to know). (Laughter) That’s why a literal translation of that is kind of awkward. It is constructed by attaching the future tense of the “to be” verb to the perfect participle of the action verbs. It means this. Whatever you bind on earth shall be having been bound in the heavens. In other words, it is saying that whatever judgment that the disciples are making when settling disputes, it is something that has already been settled in heaven. Whether it’s a binding or it’s a loosing, it was already declared and settled in heaven.

How can that be if the disciples are enacting their own opinions and their own judgments supposedly and allegedly from an authority that Jesus gave them? How can heaven have already settled upon something that they are kind of making up as they go? They weren’t. [Audience member comments to David.] Exactly. They were doing it according to Torah. It was something that Elohim established in heaven a long time ago. These are the judgments by which you judge Israel.

So when the disciples take the judgments of the Torah and apply the judgments of the Torah to the situations in their day, they are actually agreeing with what heaven already said. That is because they are making judgments based upon something that YeHoVaH already said. YeHoVaH has already spoken. This is what you are to do in this situation. And the disciples say:

“Ah, here’s this situation. Here’s the judgment. We’re either binding or we’re loosing and we’re already in agreement with heaven because heaven already made that decision.”

Here, the authority that the disciples are receiving from Yeshua is not an authority to act on their own will, but it is the authority that is given to Israel — to the sons of Israel. It is to use the Torah to manage and administer to the body of Messiah, which is the nation of Israel. To rephrase, it says:

“When the judgment is bound, it shall already have been bound in heaven”

And:

“When the judgment is loosed (released), it shall already have been released in heaven.”

The action of binding or loosing, when declared by the disciples, will at that point in time already have been done by heaven. Hallelujah. Does this authority enable Yeshua’s disciples to decide on their own how to judge the body of Messiah? Because this is what the Church; the Christian Church believes and practices. Of course not. It doesn’t give them the right to do whatever they choose to do. It’s only an authority that is being passed down to all the sons of Israel — the authority of the Torah to walk in the Torah the ways that YeHoVaH has commanded.

Can a leader of Yah’s assembly make his own decision based entirely upon his own opinion about how to judge someone? Of course not. Messiah will come to judge the nations. That’s in Micah 4:2-3. It says:

“For Zion will be a source of instruction, and YeHoVaH’s teachings will proceed from Yershalayim. He will arbitrate between many peoples, and mediate for many distant nations.”

It’s going to be the Torah that he uses to judge and to settle disputes and to arbitrate between many peoples.

Summary

- Yeshua is rebuilding the fallen Tabernacle of David — the House of Israel.
- All false religions claim authority to have it their own way — and claim that God gave them this authority. But that's all based upon a sadly misinterpreted explanation from Matthew 16.
- The authority that was given to Peter and Yeshua's disciples is the Right to Govern by the Torah.

That is how we can refute this misguided notion that the church has power to enact law and to change the Sabbath to Sunday and to do away with YeHoVaH's holy days and annual observances and replace them with things like Christmas and Easter and Valentine's Day and the Tooth Fairy. So Hallelujah, we have an answer.

This is my purpose in bringing this message today. It is to present a logical, reasonable biblical explanation of this badly misinterpreted passage of scripture which seems to give authority to a religious system to tell you that you don't have to obey Elohim's commandments any more. You can celebrate Jesus' birthday on December 25th and all the rest of that nonsense.

This is our biblical answer as Messianic or Hebrew Roots or as Torah-observant people who are seeking truth and desire to live by that truth and to share this truth with others. These are the things that we need to understand so we can give a reasonable answer to people who have this misguided notion that the church has this authority to do these things.

So by the authority of the word of Elohim, we are here, gathered to observe His festivals and His celebrations and to be in obedience with His ways and His laws and to be walking those paths of righteousness. So Hallelujah to the living one! He always has an answer to some of these complicated issues and questions when we are willing to seek and to study and think and to apply what we know from the Torah and the profits to the New Testament.

There are so many misinterpretations in the New Testament. We need to do that. We need to take a studied approach and a listening to the Holy Spirit to take what is taught from the mouth of Elohim and apply it to the things said by Yeshua and his apostles. Then we will have an entirely different view and understanding of the New Testament and what Yeshua came to do.

Hallelujah. Thank you for listening. I hope that was a help to you today. Hallelujah.