

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam

DOCUMENT 330

NOT ONE WORD HAS FALLEN

A Covenant Deep Dive into the Torah of Moses and the Torah of Yahweh — *lo nafal davar echad (not one word has fallen)* (1 Kings 8:56)

Is the Law of Moses Done Away With? Are the Torah of Moses and the Torah of Yahweh Two Laws, What Does “Forever” Mean, Has Yahweh Ever Changed a Commandment, and What Does the Covenant Believer Keep Today? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response

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The Message is Sent to the World

REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	✠ ISLAM
Rabbinic Judaism holds the Torah eternal: Maimonides’ ninth principle of faith teaches that this Torah will not be changed and that no other Torah will come from the Creator. Yet the same tradition records Rav Yosef’s saying that the commandments will be annulled in the time to come (Talmud Niddah 61b), and it set aside the seventh-year release of debts in practice through Hillel’s <i>prozbul (court transfer of a debt)</i> (Mishnah Sheviit 10:3–4). The Tanakh speaks first.	Most churches teach that the Law of Moses ended at the cross, in whole or in part. The Council of Florence (1442) declared that the Mosaic ceremonies came to an end when Christ came; the Westminster Confession (1646) holds the ceremonial laws “ <i>abrogated</i> ,” the judicial laws “ <i>expired</i> ,” and the moral law binding (19.3–5); Adventist teaching keeps the Ten Commandments as the law of God and teaches that the ceremonial “ <i>law of Moses</i> ” was taken away. Is the Law of Moses a different law from the Law of Yahweh?	Islam teaches that the Torah was sent down by Allah as “ <i>guidance and light</i> ” (Q. 5:44), that ‘Isa came confirming it and making lawful some of what had been forbidden (Q. 3:50), and that the prophet of Islam “ <i>relieves them of their burden and the shackles that were upon them</i> ” (Q. 7:157). Under the doctrine of <i>naskh (abrogation)</i> (Q. 2:106), the law brought by Muhammad supersedes the earlier law.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the *Tanakh* — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh's** own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh's** covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written *Tanakh* to five questions about the Torah: whether the Torah of Moses and the Torah of **Yahweh** are one law or two, whether any text sets an end to it, what *olam* (*forever*) means, whether **Yahweh** or anyone else has ever changed a commandment, and what the covenant believer keeps today. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books and personal names are given in English. Hebrew transliterations appear in ***bold italic*** with the English meaning in parentheses at every occurrence. Scripture references are bold. **Verse numbers follow the English version. In a few chapters the Hebrew Bible divides the chapter at a different point, so the same verse carries a different number in the Hebrew text. Where that happens, the Hebrew number is given in brackets on first citation, for example Numbers 30:13 [Hebrew 30:14].** Scripture is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. Each finding is graded under the two-or-three-witness standard as **Corroborated** (two or more independent Tanakh witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text**. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic literature, New Testament texts, church councils and confessions, and the Qur'an are cited as historical and comparative reference —

not as binding authority. Where a New Testament text lines up with the Tanakh, this document says so; where it departs, this document says so. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	Abraham's obedience before Sinai; the Ten Words and the book beside the ark; the everlasting statutes; the rulings adjusted through Moses; the sealing of the Torah; what the Torah says of itself
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi	Not one word fallen; the names of the Torah; the covenant not broken; the prophets on the offerings; the statutes of heaven and earth; the Servant who magnifies Torah; remember the Torah of Moses
Ketuvim (Writings)	Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles	Forever and ever; the Torah kept in exile; the oath to the Torah of Elohim ; the horn that would change law; the offerings written in the Torah of Yahweh

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
New Testament	Matthew 5:17–19; Mark 7:1–23; Acts 10:9–28; 15:1–10; 21:20–24; Romans 3:31; 7:4–14; 2 Corinthians 3:6–14; Galatians 3:10–19; Hebrews 7:12, 18; 10:1–9; James 2:10; 1 John 3:4; 5:3; Revelation 12:17; 14:12	The texts most often preached for and against <i>“done away,”</i> weighed in Section XI-B (Doc 329 weighs the others)
Rabbinic literature	Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin 10 (ninth principle); Talmud Niddah 61b; Jerusalem Talmud Megillah 1:5; Mishnah Sheviit 10:3–4; Talmud Shabbat 13b	The eternity of the Torah; the saying that the commandments will be annulled; the prozbul; Ezekiel's temple

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Church writers and confessions	Ignatius, Magnesians 8–10 (c. 110); Epistle of Barnabas 4:7–8 (c. 130); Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho 18; Council of Florence, bull Cantate Domino (1442); Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae I-II, q. 103; Westminster Confession 19.3–5 (1646); Bible Readings for the Home, “Moral and Ceremonial Compared”; Catechism of the Catholic Church 1964	When and how the churches came to teach that the Torah ended, in whole or in part
Qur’an	Q. 2:106; 3:50; 4:160; 5:3; 5:43–44; 6:146; 7:157	The Torah as guidance and light; abrogation; burdens lifted; food laws as punishment

I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — “DONE AWAY WITH,” OR “NOT ONE WORD HAS FALLEN”?

I-A. The Question as It Is Usually Asked

Few questions divide the readers of the Bible more sharply than this one. Much of the Christian world preaches that the Law of Moses was done away with at the cross: that it was a temporary code for Israel, that its Sabbaths, feasts, and food laws have ended, and that only a moral core remains, if anything remains at all. Some teach that the Law of Moses and the Law of Yahweh are two different laws, one nailed to the cross and the other kept forever. Rabbinic Judaism answers that the Torah is eternal, yet its own literature records a teacher who said that the commandments would be annulled in the time to come. Islam answers that the Torah came from Allah, and that the law brought by Muhammad supersedes it.

The questions put to this Institution are direct:

First: are the Law of Moses and the Law of **Yahweh** two laws, or one?

Second: does any text of the Tanakh set an end to the Torah?

Third: the Torah calls its statutes *olam* (*forever*). Does *olam* really mean forever?

Fourth: has **Yahweh** ever changed a commandment, and may anyone else change one?

Fifth: with no Temple standing, what does the covenant believer keep today?

This study builds on earlier work in the Library and does not repeat it in full. Doc 10 traced when the teaching that the Torah was abolished first appeared. Doc 270 (*For Our Good Always*) set out why the

commandments were given; Doc 285 (*Righteous Statutes and Judgments*) showed the Torah’s claim to righteousness before the nations; Docs 281 and 284 showed that the new covenant writes the same Torah on the heart; Doc 288 showed that the priesthood of Levi was never dissolved; Doc 289 examined the “*man of lawlessness*”; and Doc 329 (*As You Are, So Shall the Stranger Be*) tested the “*the law is dead*” teaching as it touches the stranger. The present document takes up the whole question for everyone. It gathers the names the Tanakh gives the Torah, tests the word *olam* (*forever*) honestly, examines every place the Torah records a ruling being adjusted, faces the hardest prophetic texts, and sets out what can and cannot be kept today. It corrects two points in earlier material (Section XII).

I-B. The Question in the Tanakh’s Own Terms

The Tanakh never uses the phrase “*done away with*” of the Torah. It has words for falling, breaking, changing, and annulling, and Section II shows exactly where it uses them. On the day the Temple was dedicated, Solomon stood before the whole assembly of Israel and gave a verdict on the words given through Moses:

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן מְנוּחָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לֹא־נִפֹּל דְּבַר אֶחָד מִכָּל דְּבָרֵי הַטּוֹב
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ

“Blessed be Yahweh, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He spoke. Not one word has fallen of all His good word which He spoke by the hand of Moses His servant.” (1 Kings 8:56)

Joshua had said the same twice before him (Joshua 21:45; 23:14).

The five questions therefore become:

1. Is the word “*spoken by the hand of Moses*” a different word from the word of **Yahweh**?
2. Where, if anywhere, is it written that a word has fallen since?
3. What horizon does the Torah set for its own “*forever*”?
4. Who has authority to change it?
5. And what does a commandment do when the altar it serves is not standing?

Every finding below is graded. A finding is **Corroborated** when two or more independent Tanakh witnesses carry it (**Deuteronomy 19:15**). It is **Single witness** when only one text carries it. It is **Not in the text** when it is taught but the Tanakh does not say it.

II. THE WORD STUDY — THE LANGUAGE OF LASTING AND THE LANGUAGE OF ENDING

The Tanakh has an exact vocabulary for its laws, for lasting, and for ending. The three tables set out the terms this study relies on.

II-A. The Names of the Law

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>torah (instruction / law)</i> , תּוֹרָה	H8451	Instruction; from <i>yarab (to point, to teach)</i> . The whole covenant teaching, and also a single ruling (plural <i>torot</i>)	Malachi 4:4 [Hebrew 3:22]; Psalms 19:7 [Hebrew 19:8]
<i>mitzvah (commandment)</i> , מִצְוָה	H4687	A command; from <i>tsavah (to command)</i>	Deuteronomy 30:11 ; Genesis 26:5
<i>chuqqah / choq (statute)</i> , חֻקָּה	H2708 / H2706	A thing engraved and fixed; used also of the fixed order of heaven and earth	Jeremiah 31:35 [Hebrew 31:34]; 33:25
<i>mishpat (judgment)</i> , מִשְׁפָּט	H4941	A ruling of justice; the standard by which a case is decided	Psalms 119:160
<i>edut (testimony)</i> , עֵדוּת	H5715	The covenant witness; the tablets are the <i>luchot ha-edut (tablets of the testimony)</i>	Exodus 31:18 ; Psalms 19:7
<i>piqqudim (precepts)</i> , פִּקּוּדִים	H6490	Charges laid on a servant to keep	Psalms 111:7 ; 119:45
<i>davar (word)</i> , דָּבָר	H1697	A spoken word; the Ten are <i>aseret ha-devarim (the ten words)</i>	Exodus 34:28 ; 1 Kings 8:56

II-B. The Language of Lasting

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>olam (forever / beyond sight)</i> , עוֹלָם	H5769	Time reaching past the horizon of sight; its length is set by what it describes (Section IV)	Exodus 31:16 ; Psalms 119:152
<i>ad (perpetuity)</i> , אֶד	H5703	Continuing on; joined to <i>olam</i> in <i>le-olam va-ed (forever and ever)</i>	Psalms 111:8 ; 119:44

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>le-doroteikhem</i> (<i>throughout your generations</i>), לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם	H1755	As long as the generations of Israel continue	Exodus 12:14; Leviticus 23:14
<i>tamid</i> (<i>continually</i>), תָּמִיד	H8548	Without interruption	Psalms 119:44
<i>qum</i> (<i>to stand, to be established</i>), קוּם	H6965	To rise and stand firm	Isaiah 40:8
<i>natsav</i> (<i>to stand fixed</i>), נָצַב	H5324	Set firm, stationed in place	Psalms 119:89

II-C. The Language of Ending — and Where the Tanakh Uses It

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	MEANING	WHO DOES IT, AND TO WHAT
<i>nafal</i> (<i>to fall, to fail</i>), נָפַל	H5307	To drop, to come to nothing	Never a word of Yahweh : “ <i>not one word has fallen</i> ” (Joshua 21:45; 23:14; 1 Kings 8:56; 2 Kings 10:10)
<i>hefer</i> (<i>to break, to annul</i>), הִפָּר	H6565	To break a covenant or make it void	People break it (Leviticus 26:15; Isaiah 24:5; Jeremiah 31:32 [Hebrew 31:31]); Yahweh swears He will not (Leviticus 26:44; Judges 2:1)
<i>shanah</i> (<i>to change</i>), שָׁנָה	H8138	To alter; to do a second time	Yahweh does not: “ <i>I Yahweh do not change</i> ” (Malachi 3:6); “ <i>what has gone out of My lips I will not alter</i> ” (Psalms 89:34 [Hebrew 89:35])
<i>chalaf</i> (<i>to change, to pass on</i>), חָלַף	H2498	To exchange; to pass away	The people of the earth “ <i>changed the statute</i> ” (Isaiah 24:5)
<i>chillel</i> (<i>to profane</i>), חָלַל	H2490	To treat as common	“ <i>My covenant I will not profane</i> ” (Psalms 89:34)
<i>mut</i> (<i>to be moved</i>), מוּט	H4131	To totter, to be removed	“ <i>My covenant of peace shall not be moved</i> ” (Isaiah 54:10)

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	MEANING	WHO DOES IT, AND TO WHAT
<i>gara</i> (to diminish), גָּרַע	H1639	To take away from	Forbidden to be done to the commanded word (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32 [Hebrew 13:1])
Aramaic <i>shena</i> (to change) and <i>dat</i> (law), שְׁנָא, דָּת	H8133 / H1882	To alter; a decree or law	The horn of Daniel's vision " <i>shall think to change times and law</i> " (Daniel 7:25)

Four lexical observations govern what follows.

First, the Tanakh has a full vocabulary for ending a covenant or a law — falling, breaking, changing, profaning, moving, diminishing — and it never once uses that vocabulary of **Yahweh's** side of the Torah.

Every verb of breaking falls on people:

"they have transgressed the torot, changed the statute, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isaiah 24:5).

Every statement about Yahweh is a refusal:

"I will not reject them ... to break My covenant with them" (Leviticus 26:44).

Second, *nafal* (to fall) gives the Tanakh's own record of the words spoken through Moses. Three witnesses say that none has fallen: Joshua at the end of the conquest (**Joshua 21:45**), Joshua before his death (**Joshua 23:14**), and Solomon at the dedication of the Temple (**1 Kings 8:56**). Solomon names the source: the good word *"which He spoke by the hand of Moses His servant."*

Third, *chuqqah* (statute) is used both for the statutes of the Torah and for the fixed order of the heavens. Jeremiah calls the sun, the moon, and the stars **Yahweh's** *chuqqim* (statutes) (**Jeremiah 31:35–36** [Hebrew 31:34–35]) and speaks of *"the statutes of heaven and earth"* (**Jeremiah 33:25**). Section IV shows why that matters.

Fourth, the only figure in the Tanakh who sets out to change Yahweh's law is the horn of Daniel's vision, which *"shall speak words against the Most High ... and shall think to change times and law"* (**Daniel 7:25**). Doc 289 examined that figure. Changing the law is not presented as a gift to the holy ones; it is presented as the mark of their oppressor.

III. THE TORAH OF MOSES AND THE TORAH OF YAHWEH — ONE TORAH OR TWO?

III-A. The Names the Tanakh Gives the Torah

The phrases *“the Law of Moses”* and *“the Law of Yahweh”* are often taught as two different codes, the first temporary and ended, the second eternal. Tanakh’s own usage can be tested directly. The table gathers the places where the historical books and the Prophets name the Torah.

TEXT	WHAT THE TORAH IS CALLED	WHAT THE PASSAGE SHOWS
Joshua 8:31–32	<i>“the book of the Torah of Moses”</i>	The altar of uncut stones built <i>“as Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded,”</i> following Exodus 20:25 [Hebrew 20:22] and Deuteronomy 27:5–6
1 Kings 2:3	<i>“the Torah of Moses”</i>	David charges Solomon to keep Yahweh’s statutes, commandments, judgments, and testimonies <i>“as it is written in the Torah of Moses”</i>
2 Kings 14:6	<i>“the book of the Torah of Moses, in which Yahweh commanded”</i>	Amaziah obeys Deuteronomy 24:16 ; the command is Yahweh’s , the book is Moses’
2 Kings 23:25	<i>“all the Torah of Moses”</i>	Josiah turned to Yahweh with all his heart, soul, and might according to it
1 Chronicles 16:40; 2 Chronicles 31:3	<i>“the Torah of Yahweh”</i>	The daily burnt offerings, and the offerings for the Sabbaths, new moons, and feasts, are what is written in the Torah of Yahweh
2 Chronicles 34:14	<i>“the book of the Torah of Yahweh by the hand of Moses”</i>	Both names in one phrase
Ezra 3:2; 7:6, 10	<i>“the Torah of Moses the man of Elobim”; “the Torah of Moses, which Yahweh the Elobim of Israel had given”; “the Torah of Yahweh”</i>	The altar rebuilt by the Torah of Moses; Ezra’s scroll called by both names

TEXT	WHAT THE TORAH IS CALLED	WHAT THE PASSAGE SHOWS
Nehemiah 8:1, 8, 14, 18	<i>“the book of the Torah of Moses, which Yahweh had commanded Israel”; “the book of the Torah of Elohim”; “the Torah which Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses”</i>	Three names for one scroll in one chapter, read aloud through the Feast of Booths
Nehemiah 10:29 [Hebrew 10:30]	<i>“the Torah of Elohim, which was given by the hand of Moses the servant of Elohim”</i>	The oath of the returned exiles
Daniel 9:10–13	<i>“His torot, which He set before us by the hand of His servants the prophets”; “the Torah of Moses the servant of Elohim”</i>	Daniel confesses the breach of the Torah of Moses as disobedience to the voice of Yahweh
Malachi 4:4 [Hebrew 3:22]	<i>“the Torah of Moses My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb”</i>	Yahweh Himself calls it the Torah of Moses and claims it as His own command

Finding — one Torah or two: the same scroll is called the Torah of Moses, the Torah of **Yahweh**, and the Torah of **Elohim**, and several passages join the names in a single phrase (2 Chronicles 34:14; Ezra 7:6; Nehemiah 8:1, 14; 10:29). Moses is the hand; **Yahweh** is the One who commanded. **Corroborated.** That the Torah of Moses and the Torah of **Yahweh** are two laws of different authority or different duration is **Not in the text**.

III-B. The Ten Words Stand in the “Torah of Moses,” and the Offerings Stand in the “Torah of Yahweh”

The two-law teaching usually draws the line this way: the “**Law of Yahweh**” is the Ten Commandments, kept forever; the “**Law of Moses**” is the offerings, feasts, and ordinances, ended at the cross. Tanakh’s own usage crosses that line in both directions.

Malachi’s last charge names “*the Torah of Moses My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb*” (Malachi 4:4). Horeb is where the Ten Words were spoken (Deuteronomy 4:10–13; 5:2).

Moses opens his own account with “*This is the Torah which Moses set before the children of Israel*” (Deuteronomy 4:44), and the next chapter repeats the Ten Words (Deuteronomy 5:6–21 [Hebrew 5:6–18]). The Ten Commandments stand inside the Torah of Moses.

In the other direction, the Chronicler calls the daily burnt offerings *“all that is written in the Torah of Yahweh”* (1 Chronicles 16:40), and Hezekiah’s offerings for the Sabbaths, the new moons, and the appointed feasts are given *“as it is written in the Torah of Yahweh”* (2 Chronicles 31:3). The offerings stand inside the Torah of Yahweh.

Finding — the two-law line: the Tanakh places the Ten Words in the Torah of Moses and the offerings in the Torah of **Yahweh**. A division that assigns the Ten Words to **Yahweh** and everything else to Moses is **Not in the text**.

III-C. What Is True: The Tablets Inside, the Book Beside

Honesty requires the other side. The Tanakh does set the Ten Words apart, in four ways.

First: Yahweh spoke them Himself, out of the fire, to the whole assembly, “and He added no more” (Deuteronomy 5:22 [Hebrew 5:19]).

Second: He wrote them with His own finger on two tablets of stone (Exodus 31:18; 34:1, 28; Deuteronomy 10:4).

Third: the tablets were placed inside the ark (Exodus 25:16; Deuteronomy 10:1–5); *“there was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone”* (1 Kings 8:9).

Fourth: the book Moses wrote was placed “beside the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your Elohim, that it may be there as a witness against you” (Deuteronomy 31:26).

These distinctions are real. They concern the manner of giving and the place of keeping; they do not concern authority or duration. In the same chapter that records the Ten Words, the people asked Moses to stand between them and the fire and to hear the rest for them, and **Yahweh** answered, *“They have spoken well”* (Deuteronomy 5:27–28 [Hebrew 5:24–25]). Then He said to Moses:

“But as for you, stand here by Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which you shall teach them, that they may do them in the land.” (Deuteronomy 5:31 [Hebrew 5:28])

The rest of the Torah came from the same mouth, through a mediator the people themselves asked for. The book placed beside the ark is called a *“witness,”* and two verses later Moses calls heaven and earth to witness with a word from the same root (Deuteronomy 31:26, 28). A witness to a covenant is not a lesser law; it is the record that the covenant was made.

One further observation tests the line from inside the churches that draw it. Adventist teaching keeps the seventh-day Sabbath of the Ten Words and teaches that the ceremonial law written in the book was taken away at the cross. Yet Adventist practice also keeps the clean and unclean food law of **Leviticus**

11, which stands in the book, not on the tablets. The line cannot be held even by those who draw it, because the Tanakh never drew it.

Finding — the tablets and the book: that the Ten Words were given and kept in a distinct way is **Corroborated** (Deuteronomy 5:22; 10:1–5; 1 Kings 8:9). That this distinction ended the authority of the rest of the Torah is **Not in the text** (Deuteronomy 5:31; 31:26).

IV. WHAT DOES “FOREVER” MEAN? — OLAM TESTED HONESTLY

IV-A. The Objection, Stated Fairly

The Torah calls its Sabbath *berit olam* (*an everlasting covenant*) (Exodus 31:16), its feasts *chuqqat olam* (*a statute forever*) (Leviticus 23:14, 21, 31, 41), and its priesthood *kehunnat olam* (*an everlasting priesthood*) (Exodus 40:15; Numbers 25:13). A common answer is that *olam* does not mean “forever” at all, only “an age” or “a long time,” so a statute given *le-olam* could expire when its age ended. The answer deserves a fair hearing, because it is partly right.

TEXT	WHAT IS CALLED OLAM	HOW LONG IT LASTED
Exodus 21:6	The servant who chooses to stay “ <i>shall serve him le-olam</i> ”	His lifetime
1 Samuel 1:22, 28	Samuel shall dwell before Yahweh “ <i>ad olam</i> ”	“ <i>All the days that he lives</i> ” (1:28)
Jonah 2:6 [Hebrew 2:7]	“ <i>The earth with its bars was about me le-olam</i> ”	Three days and three nights (Jonah 1:17 [Hebrew 2:1])
Deuteronomy 23:3 [Hebrew 23:4]	Ammonite and Moabite barred “ <i>ad olam</i> ”	Set beside “ <i>even to the tenth generation</i> ” in the same verse

These witnesses show that *olam*, by itself, names time reaching past the horizon of sight: as long as the thing it describes lasts. The servant serves *le-olam* because he serves as long as he lives. The length is set by the subject, not by the word. The objection is right that the word alone does not settle the question.

IV-B. What Sets the Horizon of the Torah's "Forever"

The question, then, is what the Tanakh says about the subject. It does not leave it open. It ties the Torah's *olam* to five things.

Witness One — the generations of Israel. The statutes are given *le-doroteikhem (throughout your generations)*:

1. the Passover (**Exodus 12:14, 17**),
2. the Sabbath (**Exodus 31:16**),
3. the feasts and the Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 23:14, 21, 31, 41**).

The horizon is as long as Israel has generations.

Witness Two — the statutes of heaven and earth. Jeremiah measures the length of Israel's generations against the statutes of creation:

אִם-יִמָּשׁוּ הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה מִלְפָּנַי נֶאֱמַר-יִהְיֶה גַם זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יֹשְׁבֹתוֹ מִהְיוֹת גּוֹי לְפָנַי כָּל-הַיָּמִים

"If these statutes depart from before Me, says Yahweh, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me all the days." (Jeremiah 31:36 [Hebrew 31:35])

The word is *ba-chuqqim (the statutes)*, the same word used for the statutes of the Torah.

The sun, the moon, and the stars are **Yahweh's** statutes for the sky;

The Torah is His statutes for His people.

The same prophet says it again: if **Yahweh** has not appointed *"the statutes of heaven and earth,"* then He will cast away the seed of Jacob (**Jeremiah 33:25–26**). The covenant that writes the Torah on the heart (**Jeremiah 31:33** [Hebrew 31:32]) is fastened, in the same chapter, to the order of the heavens.

Witness Three — doubled and tripled words of lasting. When the Psalms speak of the Torah, they do not rest on *olam* alone.

"All His precepts are sure; they are established la-ad le-olam (forever and ever)" (Psalms 111:7–8).

"The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments is forever" (Psalms 119:160).

And David's vow puts three words of lasting in one line:

וְאֶשְׁמְרָה תּוֹרָתְךָ תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

“So shall I keep Your Torah continually, forever and ever.” (Psalms 119:44)

Witness Four — a thousand generations. *“Remember His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, the covenant which He made with Abraham ... and confirmed to Jacob for a statute, to Israel for an everlasting covenant” (1 Chronicles 16:15–17; Psalms 105:8–10).*

Moses uses the same measure: Yahweh keeps covenant and covenant love *“with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations” (Deuteronomy 7:9).*

Witness Five — the word stands. *“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our Elohim shall stand forever” (Isaiah 40:8). “Forever, O Yahweh, Your word stands firm in heaven” (Psalms 119:89). “Of old I have known from Your testimonies that You have founded them forever” (Psalms 119:152).*

Finding — what “forever” means for the Torah: *olam* alone names time past the horizon of sight. For the Torah, the Tanakh fixes that horizon at the generations of Israel, the statutes of heaven and earth, and a thousand generations, and it doubles and triples its words of lasting when it speaks of the Torah. **Corroborated.** That *olam* proves the Torah’s age has ended is **Not in the text:** the argument needs a text that sets the end, and there is none.

IV-C. Everlasting Statutes Tied to What Is Not Standing

Some *olam* statutes are bound to things that are not standing today:

1. the lamp in the Tent (**Exodus 27:21**),
2. the priests’ portion of the offerings (**Leviticus 6:18** [Hebrew 6:11]),
3. the priesthood itself (**Exodus 40:15**).

The Tanakh does not call them ended.

It calls them waiting: *“the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king and without prince, and without sacrifice ... afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek Yahweh their Elohim” (Hosea 3:4–5).*

Jeremiah promises that the Levitical priests shall not lack a man to offer before **Yahweh**, and he ties that promise, too, to the covenant with day and night (**Jeremiah 33:18–21**). Doc 288 examined the priesthood in full. **A statute waiting for its altar is not an abolished statute.**

V. HAS YAHWEH EVER CHANGED A COMMANDMENT? — THE TORAH’S OWN RECORD

V-A. The Rulings the Torah Records as Added or Adjusted

The Torah records several places where a ruling was added to or adjusted. They should be stated plainly, because they are sometimes used to argue that the Torah was always meant to change. The table sets them out.

CASE	FIRST RULING	WHAT WAS ADDED OR ADJUSTED	WHO SPOKE
Meat at home	Leviticus 17:3–4: in the wilderness, an ox, lamb, or goat was slaughtered at the Tent	Deuteronomy 12:15, 20–21: in the Land, when the place is far, slaughter and eat within your gates; the blood is still poured out (12:16, 23–24)	Yahweh, through Moses, before the Torah was complete
The second Passover	Numbers 9:2–5: the Passover on the fourteenth of the first month	Numbers 9:6–12: the unclean and the far-off keep it on the fourteenth of the second month	Moses: <i>“Stand, and I will hear what Yahweh will command concerning you”</i> (9:8)
The daughters of Zelophehad	Numbers 26:52–56: the Land divided by the fathers’ houses	Numbers 27:1–11: daughters inherit where there is no son. Numbers 36:1–9: they marry within their father’s tribe	<i>“Moses brought their case before Yahweh”</i> (27:5); <i>“according to the word of Yahweh”</i> (36:5)
Age of Levitical service	Numbers 4:3: from thirty years old, for carrying the Tent	Numbers 8:24–25: from twenty-five. 1 Chronicles 23:24–27: from twenty, once the Tent no longer needed carrying	Yahweh through Moses; David, who said the pattern came to him <i>“in writing from the hand of Yahweh”</i> (1 Chronicles 28:19)
Penalties not yet declared	Leviticus 24:10–12; Numbers 15:32–34	The blasphemer and the wood-gatherer were held <i>“that it might be declared to them by the mouth of Yahweh”</i>	Moses waited; he did not legislate

Four things are common to every case.

1. **Each came from the mouth of Yahweh.**
2. **Each came through Moses — or, in David’s case, was claimed as written from Yahweh’s hand.**
3. **Each answered a case or a change of circumstance** — a journey too far, a household without sons, a Tent no longer carried — and kept the principle beneath it: the blood is still poured out, the inheritance still stays in the tribe, the Passover is still kept.
4. **And none of them repealed a commandment.** The Levitical service age is the one case where readers differ: rabbinic tradition reads twenty-five as the start of training and thirty as the start of full service, while others read two different tasks; and David’s further change rests on his own testimony alone. **It is graded a Single witness.**

V-B. Then the Torah Was Sealed

When the Torah was complete, Moses sealed it twice:

“You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take away from it” (Deuteronomy 4:2);

“Whatever I command you, be careful to do it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it” (Deuteronomy 12:32 [Hebrew 13:1]).

He named it: *“These are the words of the covenant”* (Deuteronomy 29:1 [Hebrew 28:69]).

And he set the boundary for every prophet after him: the prophet like Moses speaks *“all that I command him,”* and the prophet who speaks a word **Yahweh** did not command is not to be heard (Deuteronomy 18:18–20).

The prophets after Moses kept that boundary. They added no commandment and repealed none. They called Israel back:

“Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the Torah which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.” (2 Kings 17:13)

V-C. Changes Made by Men — and What the Tanakh Calls Them

TEXT	WHAT WAS DONE	HOW THE TANAKH JUDGES IT
1 Kings 12:32–33	Jeroboam moved the feast to the eighth month, <i>“in the month which he had devised from his own heart”</i>	The sin of Jeroboam, carried through the whole history of the northern kingdom (2 Kings 17:21–22)
Isaiah 24:5	The people of the earth <i>“changed the statute”</i>	The earth is polluted under them, and the curse devours it (24:5–6)
Isaiah 29:13	Their fear of Yahweh is <i>“a commandment of men learned by rote”</i>	Yahweh will do a marvelous work; the wisdom of their wise will perish (29:14)
Jeremiah 8:8	<i>“The false pen of the scribes has made it into a lie”</i>	<i>“How can you say, We are wise, and the Torah of Yahweh is with us?”</i>
Isaiah 10:1–2	Those who <i>“decree unrighteous decrees”</i>	Woe: the poor are robbed of their right
Daniel 7:25	The horn <i>“shall think to change times and law”</i>	The oppressor of the holy ones, judged and destroyed (7:26)

The Tanakh also records observances the people took upon themselves that added remembrance without removing any commandment:

the days of Purim, which the Jews *“ordained and took upon themselves”* (**Esther 9:27**), and the wood offering of Nehemiah’s covenant (**Nehemiah 10:34** [Hebrew 10:35]).

Whether such additions sit comfortably with **Deuteronomy 4:2** is an old question. What is plain is that none of them set aside a commandment, and none was presented as a new word from Yahweh.

Finding — who may change the Torah: Yahweh added to and adjusted His rulings, through Moses, while the Torah was being given. Corroborated (Numbers 9:8–12; 27:5–11; 36:5–9; Deuteronomy 12:15–16). That any man after Moses — prophet, king, priest, scribe, or council — received authority to repeal a commandment is Not in the text. Changing the law is named as the mark of rebellion. Corroborated (1 Kings 12:33; Isaiah 24:5; Jeremiah 8:8; Daniel 7:25).

VI. DID THE PROPHETS REJECT THE OFFERINGS? — THE HARDEST TEXTS IN THE TANAKH

VI-A. The Texts

Some of the strongest arguments that the Torah was meant to pass away are drawn from the Tanakh itself. Several prophets and psalms speak as if Yahweh never wanted the offerings at all. They should be read in full before they are answered.

TEXT	WHAT IT SAYS
1 Samuel 15:22	<i>“To obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.”</i>
Psalms 40:6–8 [Hebrew 40:7–9]	<i>“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire ... I delight to do Your will, O my Elohim, and Your Torah is within my heart.”</i>
Psalms 50:8–15	<i>“I will take no bull from your house ... Offer to Elohim thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High.”</i>
Psalms 51:16–17 [Hebrew 51:18–19]	<i>“You do not delight in sacrifice ... The sacrifices of Elohim are a broken spirit.”</i>
Isaiah 1:11–17	<i>“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me? ... New moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies — I cannot bear iniquity with the solemn meeting.”</i>
Jeremiah 7:21–23	<i>“I did not speak to your fathers ... concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this thing I commanded them: Obey My voice.”</i>
Hosea 6:6	<i>“I desire covenant love and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of Elohim more than burnt offerings.”</i>
Amos 5:21–25	<i>“I hate, I despise your feasts ... Did you bring to Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years?”</i>
Micah 6:6–8	<i>“Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings? ... Do justice, love covenant love, and walk humbly with your Elohim.”</i>

VI-B. How the Prophets Explain Themselves

Witness One — the comparison is stated.

Hosea explains his own sentence in its second half: **Yahweh** desires the knowledge of **Elohim *mi-olot*** (*more than burnt offerings*) (Hosea 6:6).

Samuel puts the same thing as a comparison: obedience is *“better than”* sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22). The *“not this, but that”* of Hebrew speech often means *“this rather than that”*: the first set above the second, not the second abolished.

Witness Two — the problem is the worshipper. Isaiah says why the offerings are refused: *“your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean ... seek justice, rebuke the oppressor”* (Isaiah 1:15–17).

The chapter that refuses *“new moon and Sabbath”* (1:13)

- A. belongs to the same prophet who blesses the man who keeps the Sabbath (Isaiah 56:2, 6; 58:13–14),
- B. who promises that the foreigner’s burnt offerings *“shall be accepted on My altar”* (Isaiah 56:7),
- C. and who foresees all flesh coming to worship *“from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath”* (Isaiah 66:23).

Isaiah did not abolish the Sabbath in chapter 1 and restore it in chapter 56. He refused it from hands full of blood.

Witness Three — the same psalms restore the offerings. Psalm 51 says that **Yahweh** does not delight in sacrifice, and two verses later:

“Then You will delight in the sacrifices of righteousness, in burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then they will offer bulls on Your altar” (Psalms 51:19 [Hebrew 51:21]).

Psalm 40 sets offerings aside in favor of *“Your Torah within my heart”* (Psalms 40:8 [Hebrew 40:9]) — the very Torah that commands the offerings.

VI-C. Jeremiah 7:22, the Hardest Verse

Jeremiah 7:22 is the strongest text of all:

“For I did not speak to your fathers, nor command them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices.”

Three readings are held, and this study sets out each one.

First: the comparative reading, as in **Hosea 6:6.** Obedience was the main thing; the offerings came second.

Second: the order of giving. The first word at the going out was obedience:

“If you will diligently listen to the voice of Yahweh your Elohim” (Exodus 15:26),

and at Sinai, *“if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant”* (Exodus 19:5). The laws of the offerings came afterward.

The next verse supports this reading: *“But this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your Elohim”* (Jeremiah 7:23).

Third: some modern scholars read the verse, together with Amos 5:25, as reflecting a tradition that knew no sacrifices in the wilderness.

Jeremiah himself rules out the conclusion that offerings were never Yahweh’s will.

In the same book he foresees people coming from the towns of Judah *“bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices ... to the house of Yahweh”* (Jeremiah 17:26),

the voice of those *“who bring thanksgiving into the house of Yahweh”* (Jeremiah 33:11),

and the Levitical priests who shall never lack a man *“to offer burnt offerings ... and to make sacrifice continually”* (Jeremiah 33:18).

The first and second readings agree with Jeremiah’s own book. The third does not.

Finding — the prophets and the offerings: the prophets set obedience, justice, covenant love, and a broken heart above the offerings, and they refuse offerings from unrepentant hands. Corroborated (1 Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 1:15–17; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8). That they abolished the offering laws is Not in the text (Psalms 51:19; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 17:26; 33:18; Malachi 3:3–4).

VII. THE TORAH KEPT WITHOUT A TEMPLE — THE WITNESS OF THE EXILE

If the Torah depended on the Temple, it would have ended in 586 BCE, when Babylon burned the house of Yahweh.

The Tanakh records what the faithful did instead.

WITNESS	TEXT	WHAT WAS KEPT WITHOUT A TEMPLE
Daniel in Babylon	Daniel 1:8	He would not defile himself with the king’s food

WITNESS	TEXT	WHAT WAS KEPT WITHOUT A TEMPLE
Daniel under Darius	Daniel 6:10 [Hebrew 6:11]	Prayer three times a day toward Jerusalem, as Solomon had asked of the exiles (1 Kings 8:46–49)
Ezekiel among the exiles	Ezekiel 4:14	<i>“From my youth until now I have not eaten what died of itself or was torn, nor has abominable flesh come into my mouth”</i>
Ezekiel’s word to the elders in exile	Ezekiel 20:1, 19–20	He sets before them the charge given in the wilderness — <i>“Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments and do them, and hallow My Sabbaths”</i> — as the measure still standing over them in Babylon
Daniel’s confession	Daniel 9:5, 10–13	The exile is the curse <i>“written in the Torah of Moses”</i> — the Torah still in force over the exiles
Ezra in Babylon	Ezra 7:10	<i>“Ezra had set his heart to seek the Torah of Yabweh, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statute and judgment”</i>
The Torah’s own foresight	Deuteronomy 4:27–30; 30:1–3	From among the nations <i>“you will return to Yabweh your Elohim and obey His voice”</i>

The Torah foresaw the exile and placed the exiles under it, not outside it.

Leviticus 26 describes the land lying desolate and the people in their enemies’ land, and then says:

“Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor abhor them, to destroy them utterly and to break My covenant with them, for I am Yabweh their Elohim.” (Leviticus 26:44)

What fell in 586 BCE was the altar.

The Torah stayed with the people who kept it.

Finding — **the Torah without a Temple:** Corroborated (Daniel 1:8; 6:10; Ezekiel 4:14; Ezra 7:10; Leviticus 26:40–45). **The loss of the Temple suspended the altar; it did not end the Torah.**

VIII. THE TORAH IN THE DAYS TO COME — WHAT THE PROPHETS FORESEE

VIII-A. The Prophets' Witness

Docs 281 and **329** showed that the new covenant writes the same Torah on the heart and that the nations come to it. The table gathers what the Prophets say of the Torah in the days to come.

TEXT	WHAT THE PROPHETS FORESEE
Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2	<i>“Out of Zion shall go forth Torah, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem”</i>
Isaiah 42:4, 21	The Servant of Yahweh: <i>“the coastlands shall wait for his Torah”; “Yahweh was pleased, for His righteousness’ sake, to magnify Torah and make it glorious”</i>
Jeremiah 31:33 [Hebrew 31:32]	<i>“I will put My Torah within them, and on their heart I will write it”</i>
Ezekiel 36:27; 37:24	<i>“I will cause you to walk in My statutes”; under David My servant “they shall walk in My judgments and keep My statutes and do them”</i>
Ezekiel 44:23–24	The priests teach the difference between holy and common, and <i>“keep My Torah and My statutes in all My appointed feasts, and hallow My Sabbaths”</i>
Isaiah 66:23	From new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath all flesh comes to worship
Zechariah 14:16–19	The nations go up year by year to keep the Feast of Booths
Malachi 4:4–6 [Hebrew 3:22–24]	<i>“Remember the Torah of Moses My servant,”</i> joined to the sending of Elijah before the day of Yahweh (Doc 328)

One verse deserves particular weight. **Isaiah 42** describes the mission of the Servant of **Yahweh**, and it closes the description this way:

יְהוָה חָפֵץ לְמַעַן צְדָקוֹ יַגְדִּיל תּוֹרָה וַיֵּאדִיר

“Yahweh was pleased, for His righteousness’ sake, to magnify Torah and make it glorious.”
(Isaiah 42:21)

The verbs are *yagdil* (*He will make great*) and *ya'dir* (*He will make glorious*). The Servant's work enlarges the Torah's honor; it does not shrink its reach. Whoever teaches that the Servant of Yahweh came to end the Torah has reversed the verb.

VIII-B. An Honest Note on Ezekiel's Temple

Ezekiel's vision of the restored temple (**Ezekiel 40–48**) does not match the offering lists of **Numbers 28–29** in every detail.

The new moon offering of **Ezekiel 46:6** is one bull, six lambs, and a ram;

the offering of **Numbers 28:11** is two bulls, one ram, and seven lambs.

Rabbinic tradition remembered the problem: it records that Hananiah son of Hezekiah labored to reconcile Ezekiel with the Torah (Talmud Shabbat 13b).

This study does not claim to resolve every difference. It notes that Ezekiel grounds the restored service in “*My Torah and My statutes*” (**Ezekiel 44:24**), and that a difference of detail in a future service is not a repeal of the Torah.

Finding — the Torah in the days to come: that the Torah continues in the days to come is Corroborated (Isaiah 2:3; 42:21; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 37:24; 44:24; Zechariah 14:16). How every detail of Ezekiel's service fits Numbers 28–29 remains open.

IX. A BURDEN NO ONE COULD BEAR? — WHAT THE TORAH SAYS OF ITSELF

IX-A. The Claim, and the Torah's Own Answer

A common sermon says that the Torah was a yoke no one could bear, given to prove that no one could keep it, so that people would turn from it to grace. The Torah's own description of itself can be set beside that sermon:

כִּי הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם לֹא־נִפְלֵאת הוּא מִמֶּךָ וְלֹא רְחֹקָה הוּא

“For this commandment which I command you today is not too hard for you, nor is it far off ... But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.”
(Deuteronomy 30:11, 14)

TEXT	WHAT THE TORAH SAYS OF ITSELF
Deuteronomy 6:24; 10:12–13	Given “ <i>for our good always,</i> ” “ <i>to keep us alive</i> ” (Doc 270)

TEXT	WHAT THE TORAH SAYS OF ITSELF
Deuteronomy 4:6–8	Wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations (Doc 285)
Leviticus 18:5; Ezekiel 20:11	<i>“Which if a man does, he shall live by them”</i>
Psalms 19:7–11 [Hebrew 19:8–12]	Perfect, restoring the soul, making wise the simple, sweeter than honey
Psalms 119:45	<i>“I will walk in a wide place, for I have sought Your precepts”</i>
Psalms 119:165	<i>“Great peace have those who love Your Torah, and nothing makes them stumble”</i>
Proverbs 6:23	<i>“The commandment is a lamp, and the Torah is light”</i>
Nehemiah 9:13–14	<i>“Right judgments and true torot, good statutes and commandments”</i>

IX-B. The Wide Place and the Heavy Yoke

Psalms 119:45 uses *ba-rechavah* (*in a wide place*), בְּרֹחַבָּהּ, the opposite of the narrow straits of distress. In the Tanakh the Torah is the open country, not the cell. The heavy yoke in the Tanakh belongs to others: the iron yoke of the enemy (Deuteronomy 28:48), and the heavy yoke of Rehoboam’s taxes, which Israel begged him to lighten (1 Kings 12:4).

Where the Tanakh speaks of Yahweh’s yoke, it is Israel that broke it: *“these have altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds”* (Jeremiah 5:5). Many translations read Jeremiah 2:20 the same way — *“long ago you broke your yoke ... and you said, I will not serve”* — though the Masoretic pointing can also be read *“I broke your yoke,”* of Yahweh freeing Israel from Egypt.

IX-C. Was Anyone Able to Keep It?

The Tanakh calls people righteous and blameless under the Torah, and even before it.

Abraham, before Sinai, *“kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My torot”* (Genesis 26:5).

Job was *“blameless and upright”* (Job 1:1).

David did what was right *“except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite”* (1 Kings 15:5).

Josiah turned to Yahweh *“with all his heart ... according to all the Torah of Moses”* (2 Kings 23:25).

None of them was sinless — *“there is no man who does not sin”* (1 Kings 8:46; Ecclesiastes 7:20) — and the Torah never pretended otherwise.

It provided for the one who fails: confession and return (Leviticus 26:40–42; Ezekiel 18:21–23), and forgiveness for the one who errs (Numbers 15:26–28; Doc 329). *“If You, Yah, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness”* (Psalms 130:3–4). The Torah was never a test that no one could pass. It was a covenant that made provision for those who fail.

Finding — the Torah as burden: that the Torah describes itself as near, doable, good, and freeing is **Corroborated** (Deuteronomy 30:11–14; Psalms 19:7–11; 119:45; Nehemiah 9:13). That it was given so that no one could keep it is **Not in the text**. That there was no law before Sinai is **Not in the text** (Genesis 26:5).

X. WHAT THE COVENANT BELIEVER KEEPS TODAY — SUSPENDED IS NOT ABOLISHED

X-A. Five Kinds of Commandment

Not every commandment can be kept in the same way today, and an honest answer must say which, and why. The Torah itself shows what each commandment depends on. The table sorts the commandments by that dependence.

KIND	EXAMPLES	WHAT IT DEPENDS ON	CONDITION TODAY
1. The altar and the place	Offerings, firstlings, the pilgrimage to the place Yahweh chooses (Leviticus 1–7; Deuteronomy 12:5–14; 16:16)	The sanctuary at the place Yahweh chooses, and a serving priesthood	Suspended (Hosea 3:4–5). Prayer and the offering of the lips stand in their place for now (1 Kings 8:47–50; Hosea 14:2 [Hebrew 14:3]; Psalms 141:2)
2. The priesthood’s purity and portions	The red heifer; the priests’ portions (Numbers 18–19)	Priests of proven descent serving at the altar	Suspended (Ezra 2:62; Doc 288)

KIND	EXAMPLES	WHAT IT DEPENDS ON	CONDITION TODAY
3. The Land	The produce tithe, the sabbatical year, the jubilee, the firstfruits (Leviticus 25; Deuteronomy 14:22–29; 26:1–11)	The Land of Israel and its harvest	Bound to the Land; their purposes stand (Doc 250)
4. The courts	The penalties of the Torah; the cities of refuge (Deuteronomy 16:18; 17:8–13; 19:15)	Appointed judges, inquiry, and two or three witnesses	Never in private hands (Numbers 35:12; Deuteronomy 17:9; 19:17–18)
5. Every person, everywhere	The Ten Words; the Shema and the love of Yahweh (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) ; the Sabbath (Exodus 31:16); the appointed times with rejoicing (Leviticus 23); clean food and blood (Leviticus 11; 17:10–14); sexual holiness (Leviticus 18; 20); honest weights and wages (Leviticus 19:13, 35–36); love of neighbor and stranger (Leviticus 19:18, 34); the open hand to the poor (Deuteronomy 15:7–11); the fringes (Numbers 15:38)	The person and the household	Binding now

X-B. Suspended Is Not Abolished

The first four kinds wait on something outside the believer’s control:

1. an altar,
2. a priesthood,
3. the Land,
4. a lawful court.

When those are absent, the commandments that depend on them wait. Hosea gave the waiting its own name: *“many days without sacrifice ... afterward they shall return”* (Hosea 3:4–5).

The fifth kind waits on nothing.

1. Daniel kept clean food in Babylon,

2. Ezekiel kept it among the exiles,
3. and Ezra set his heart to do the Torah before he ever saw Jerusalem (Section VII).

A closed door has not been removed from the house.

X-C. Two Warnings

First — no private person may carry out the Torah’s penalties. The Torah placed every sentence in the hands of appointed judges, after inquiry, at the mouth of two or three witnesses (**Deuteronomy 17:6–9; 19:15–18**). Even the manslayer was protected “*until he stands before the congregation for judgment*” (**Numbers 35:12**). Whoever claims the Torah for private vengeance has broken it.

Second — no teacher may lay on others what the Torah does not command, or release them from what it does (**Deuteronomy 4:2**). The verse that forbids taking away also forbids adding. This binds Miqdash Bethel by the same standard it applies to every tradition.

Finding — what is kept today: that some commandments are suspended because what they depend on is absent is Corroborated (**Hosea 3:4–5; Ezra 2:62; Deuteronomy 12:5–14**). That suspension is abolition is Not in the text. That the commandments of the fifth kind bind every covenant believer now is Corroborated (**Daniel 1:8; Ezekiel 4:14; Ezra 7:10; Isaiah 56:6**).

XI. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION ANSWERS “DONE AWAY WITH”

XI-A. The Three Traditions Side by Side

The table sets the three traditions against the Tanakh’s own findings. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only, in keeping with the standing rule of this document.

ELEMENT	☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☩ ISLAM
Teaching today	The Torah is eternal. Maimonides’ ninth principle of faith holds that this Torah will not be changed and that no other Torah will come from the Creator (Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin 10). Commandments bound to the Temple are	The Council of Florence (1442) declared that the Mosaic ceremonies, sacrifices, and sacraments came to an end when Christ came, and <u>commanded Christians to cease circumcision</u> . Aquinas held it a mortal sin to observe the ceremonies after Christ	The Torah was sent down by Allah as “ <i>guidance and light</i> ,” by which the prophets judged (Q. 5:44). ‘Isa came confirming it and “ <i>to make lawful to you some of what was forbidden to you</i> ” (Q. 3:50); the prophet of Islam relieves “ <i>their burden and</i>

ELEMENT	☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	C* ISLAM
	suspended, and prayer is offered in their place. The Jerusalem Talmud holds that the laws of the Torah will never be annulled (Megillah 1:5).	(Summa I-II, q. 103, a. 4). The Westminster Confession holds the ceremonial laws “ <i>abrogated</i> ,” the judicial laws “ <i>expired</i> ,” and the moral law binding (19.3–5). Adventist teaching keeps the Ten Commandments and holds the ceremonial law taken away (Bible Readings for the Home). The Catholic Catechism calls the Old Law “ <i>a preparation for the Gospel</i> ” (1964).	<i>the shackles that were upon them</i> ” (Q. 7:157). Some foods were forbidden to the Jews for their wrongdoing (Q. 4:160; 6:146). Under <i>naskh</i> (<i>abrogation</i>), later revelation replaces earlier law (Q. 2:106).
Covenant strength	Never accepted that the Torah ended. Kept the Sabbath, clean food, and circumcision through every exile, as Daniel and Ezekiel did. The ninth principle is Deuteronomy 4:2 and Psalms 119:152 in the form of a creed.	The Westminster Confession holds the moral law binding on all people forever (19.5). Sabbath-keeping churches keep the seventh day. The plainest New Testament sayings uphold the Torah (Matthew 5:17–19; Romans 3:31; 7:12).	Keeps the prohibition of swine, blood, and carrion (Q. 5:3), close to Leviticus 11 and 17:10–14; practices circumcision; honors Moses as a prophet and the Torah as a book from heaven.
Covenant departure	In practice, rabbinic enactment has set aside commands of the written Torah. Hillel’s prozbul (Mishnah Sheviit 10:3–4) keeps debts from being released in the seventh year — the very release Deuteronomy 15:1–2 commands and Deuteronomy 15:9 guards against evasion; later sages	The division of the Torah into moral, ceremonial, and judicial laws, two of them ended, has no Tanakh witness: Leviticus 19 sets the Sabbath (19:3), love of neighbor (19:18), mixed seed (19:19), the fruit of the fourth year (19:23–25), and honest weights (19:35–36) in one chapter under one “ <i>I am Yahweh</i> .” To call	The teaching that Israel’s food laws were a punishment stands against the Torah’s own reason, holiness (Leviticus 11:44–45), and its own description, “ <i>for your good</i> ” (Deuteronomy 10:13). Abrogation stands against Deuteronomy 4:2 and Psalms 89:34 . The Name Yahweh is absent.

ELEMENT	☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	C* ISLAM
	were themselves astonished at it. Rav Yosef’s saying that the commandments will be annulled in the time to come (Talmud Niddah 61b) stands against Psalms 119:44, “forever and ever.” The oral law raised to the level of the written adds to the word (Deuteronomy 4:2 ; Doc 10).	obedience to a commandment a mortal sin reverses Deuteronomy 13:4 [Hebrew 13:5]. To call the Torah a burden reverses Deuteronomy 30:11 .	
Covenant witness	The Jerusalem Talmud’s ruling that the laws of the Torah will never be annulled is the tradition’s own answer to Rav Yosef, and it agrees with Psalms 119:160 .	Read from the Tanakh outward, the last book of the New Testament describes the faithful as those who “keep the commandments of God” (Revelation 12:17; 14:12), and 1 John 5:3 says His commandments “are not burdensome” — Deuteronomy 30:11 restated.	The Qur’an asks why people seek judgment elsewhere “when they have the Torah, in which is the judgment of Allah” (Q. 5:43) — a witness that the Torah still carried that judgment in the prophet’s own day.

XI-B. The New Testament Read Against the Tanakh

Doc 329 (Section X-B) weighed sixteen New Testament texts on the Torah and the stranger, among them Matthew 5:17–19, Romans 3:31, 6:14, and 10:4, Galatians 3:24–25, Ephesians 2:15, Colossians 2:14–17, and Hebrews 8:13. The table below weighs the texts most often preached for **“done away”** that Doc 329 did not treat — as comparative witness, not as authority. Where they line up with the Tanakh, this document says so. Where they depart, the Tanakh governs.

NEW TESTAMENT TEXT	WHAT IT SAYS	TANAKH MEASURE	RESULT
Mark 7:19	“Thus he declared all foods clean” (as many translations render a phrase	Leviticus 11:44–47; Deuteronomy 4:2	Disputed reading. The dispute is about eating with unwashed hands (Mark 7:2–5). As a rebuke of an

NEW TESTAMENT TEXT	WHAT IT SAYS	TANAKH MEASURE	RESULT
	the King James reads <i>“purging all meats”</i>)		added tradition, it lines up; as a repeal of Leviticus 11 , it departs
Acts 10:9–16, 28	Peter’s vision of unclean animals	Leviticus 11; 20:25	Lines up as record: Peter says he has never eaten anything unclean (10:14), and himself explains the vision as being about people (10:28). As a food repeal, departs
Acts 15:10	A yoke <i>“which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear”</i>	Deuteronomy 30:11–14	Disputed reading. Spoken of circumcision as a condition of salvation (15:1). As a burden on salvation by works, lines up with Psalms 130:3–4 ; as a description of the Torah, departs
Acts 21:20–24	Thousands of believers <i>“zealous for the Torah”</i> ; Paul shown to keep it	Psalms 119:44	Lines up as record
Romans 7:12, 14	The law is holy, righteous, good, and spiritual	Psalms 19:7–9	Lines up
Romans 7:4–6	<i>“You died to the law”</i>	Psalms 130:3–4; Psalms 119:44	Disputed reading. As death to the law’s condemnation, lines up; as release from the commandments, departs
2 Corinthians 3:7–14	The <i>“ministry of death”</i> whose glory was <i>“fading”</i>	Exodus 34:29–35; Psalms 19:7	Departs as commonly read. Exodus says that Moses’ face shone and that he veiled it; it does not say the glory faded

NEW TESTAMENT TEXT	WHAT IT SAYS	TANAKH MEASURE	RESULT
Galatians 3:10–13	<i>“The curse of the law”</i>	Deuteronomy 11:26–28; 27:26; 30:11	Disputed reading. In the Tanakh the curse falls on breaking, the blessing on keeping. As <i>“the law itself is a curse,”</i> departs
Galatians 3:19	The law <i>“added because of transgressions, until the seed should come”</i>	Genesis 26:5; Psalms 105:8–10	Departs where read as a temporary law
Hebrews 7:12, 18	<i>“A change of the law”; “a setting aside of the former commandment”</i>	Numbers 25:13; Jeremiah 33:18; Malachi 3:6	Departs as commonly read (Doc 288)
Hebrews 10:1–9	<i>“He takes away the first”,</i> quoting Psalms 40:6–8	Psalms 40:8 [Hebrew 40:9]	Disputed reading. The psalm quoted ends: <i>“Your Torah is within my heart”</i> (Doc 284)
James 2:10; 1 John 3:4	Whoever stumbles in one point is guilty of all; sin is lawlessness	Deuteronomy 27:26	Lines up
1 John 5:3; Revelation 12:17; 14:12	His commandments are not burdensome; the faithful keep the commandments of God	Deuteronomy 30:11; Psalms 119:45	Lines up

Read from the Tanakh outward, the New Testament carries two voices on the Torah. Several of its texts call the Torah holy, its commandments not burdensome, and sin lawlessness. Several others, as they are commonly preached, call the Torah fading, cursed, or changed. Under the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard as this Institution applies it, the earlier witness governs the later commentary, and the Tanakh is the earlier witness. Its last word on the Torah of Moses is not “farewell” but “remember” (Malachi 4:4).

XII. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Library’s rule is that its own earlier work is tested by the same standard as everyone else’s. Two points in earlier material needed correction.

Correction 1 — the date of the abolition teaching (Doc 10). Doc 10 (Sections VI-D and XII) presented Marcion’s teaching, after 140 CE, as the first form of the claim that the Torah had ended for believers in Jesus. Two earlier church writers taught it before him: Ignatius of Antioch (c. 110), who praised those *“no longer observing Sabbaths”* and called it monstrous *“to talk of Jesus Christ and to practice Judaism”* (Magnesians 9:1; 10:3), and the Epistle of Barnabas (c. 130), which taught that Israel lost the covenant at Sinai when Moses broke the tablets (Barnabas 4:7–8). Justin Martyr, writing about 155–160, added that the Sabbath and the feasts were given to Israel because of the hardness of its heart (Dialogue with Trypho 18). Doc 10’s finding that Marcion made the first systematic rejection of the Tanakh itself stands. Its timeline (VI-D) and its Covenant Response (XII) now name Ignatius and Barnabas. **Made** in Doc 10’s Google Doc.

Correction 2 — Hebrew verse numbers in Jeremiah 31. In **Jeremiah 31** the Hebrew Bible numbers each verse one lower than the English Bible (English 31:1 is Hebrew 30:25), so **Jeremiah 31:33** is Hebrew 31:32. Doc 10 (Sections VII-B and IX) and Doc 329 (Sections III, VII-C, and X-B) cited **Jeremiah 31** without the bracket the October 8 rule requires. The bracket has been added at the first citation in each place. **Made** in both Google Docs. Doc 281 already carries the brackets. Other Library documents that cite **Jeremiah 31** should be checked when they are next revised.

XIII. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE TORAH OF YAHWEH

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, no doctrine may stand on a single text. Each declaration below draws on more than one witness.

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The Torah of Moses is the Torah of Yahweh : one Torah, commanded by Yahweh and given by the hand of Moses.	2 Chronicles 34:14; Ezra 7:6, 10; Nehemiah 8:1, 8, 14; Malachi 4:4
II	No text of the Tanakh sets an end to the Torah. Its <i>“forever”</i> is measured by the generations of Israel, the statutes of heaven and earth, and a thousand generations.	Psalms 119:44, 152, 160; Jeremiah 31:35–36; 33:25–26; 1 Chronicles 16:15–17
III	Yahweh does not change, and He does not break His covenant. It is people who break it and change the statute.	Malachi 3:6; Psalms 89:34; Leviticus 26:44; Judges 2:1; Isaiah 24:5

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
IV	Only Yahweh adjusted His rulings, through Moses, while the Torah was being given. After Moses no prophet repealed a commandment, and changing the law is the mark of rebellion.	Numbers 9:8; 27:5; 36:5; Deuteronomy 4:2; 18:18–20; 2 Kings 17:13; Daniel 7:25
V	The prophets set obedience, justice, and a broken heart above the offerings, and never abolished them.	1 Samuel 15:22; Hosea 6:6; Psalms 51:16–19; Jeremiah 33:18
VI	What waits on the altar, the priesthood, the Land, or the court is suspended, not abolished; every other commandment binds the covenant believer now.	Hosea 3:4–5; Leviticus 26:44–45; Daniel 1:8; Ezekiel 4:14; Ezra 7:10
VII	The Torah is near, good, and freeing, and the Servant of Yahweh comes to magnify it, not to dissolve it.	Deuteronomy 30:11–14; Psalms 19:7–11; 119:45; Isaiah 42:21

XIV. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS TO THE ONE WHO ASKS

Behind the question there is usually a person: a believer who has been told that the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross, or that it was never meant for him, and who has begun to read the Torah for himself. T

Tanakh's answer is fivefold.

First: read the name on the scroll. It is *“the book of the Torah of Moses, which Yahweh had commanded Israel”* (Nehemiah 8:1). There is one Torah, and its Author is Yahweh.

Second: ask where the end is written. It is not written. *“Of old I have known from Your testimonies that You have founded them forever”* (Psalms 119:152).

Third: ask who changes law. *“I Yahweh do not change”* (Malachi 3:6). The one who sets out *“to change times and law”* is the horn that wars against the holy ones (Daniel 7:25).

Fourth: keep what can be kept now, and wait for what waits. The Sabbath, the appointed times, clean food, honest weights, love of neighbor and stranger, and the open hand to the poor wait on nothing. The altar waits on **Yahweh**, and Hosea says the waiting ends in return (Hosea 3:5).

Fifth: ask for it to be written on your heart. *“I delight to do Your will, O my Elohim, and Your Torah is within my heart”* (Psalms 40:8 [Hebrew 40:9]); *“I will put My Torah within them, and on their heart I will write it”* (Jeremiah 31:33).

Not one word has fallen. Not one has been taken back.

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*“So shall I keep Your Torah continually, forever and ever. And I will walk in a wide place,
for I have sought Your precepts.”*

Psalms 119:44–45 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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