

## Am I Becoming More Righteous?

**"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practises and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.**



## The Audience, the Law and the Prophets?

- **Who am I?**
- **Audience** (Matt 4:24-5:2; Also Matt 7:28-8:1)
  - **The crowds**
    - *Syria, Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan*
  - **The disciples**
    - *The 12 & other followers*
  - **By proxy: Roman & Jewish "authorities"**



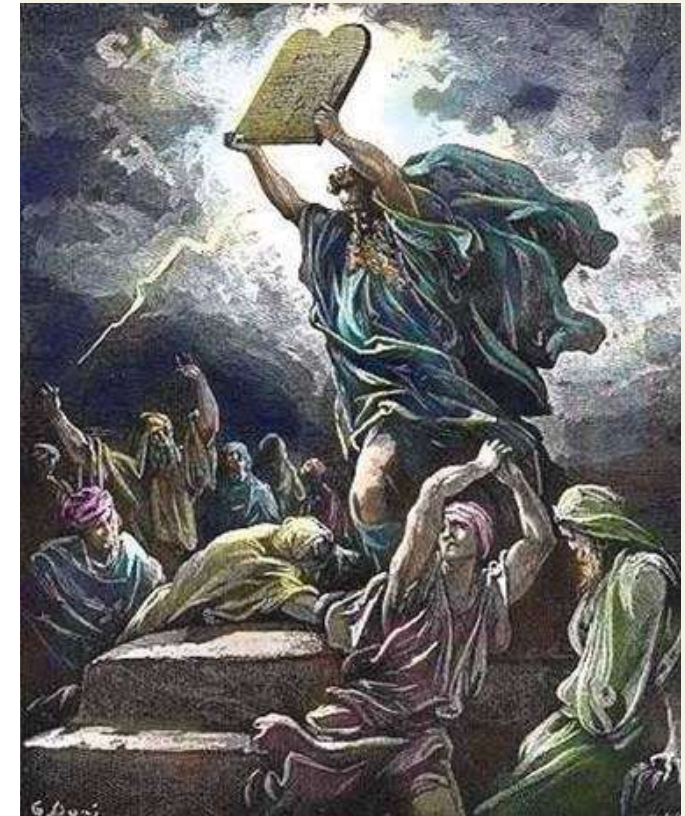
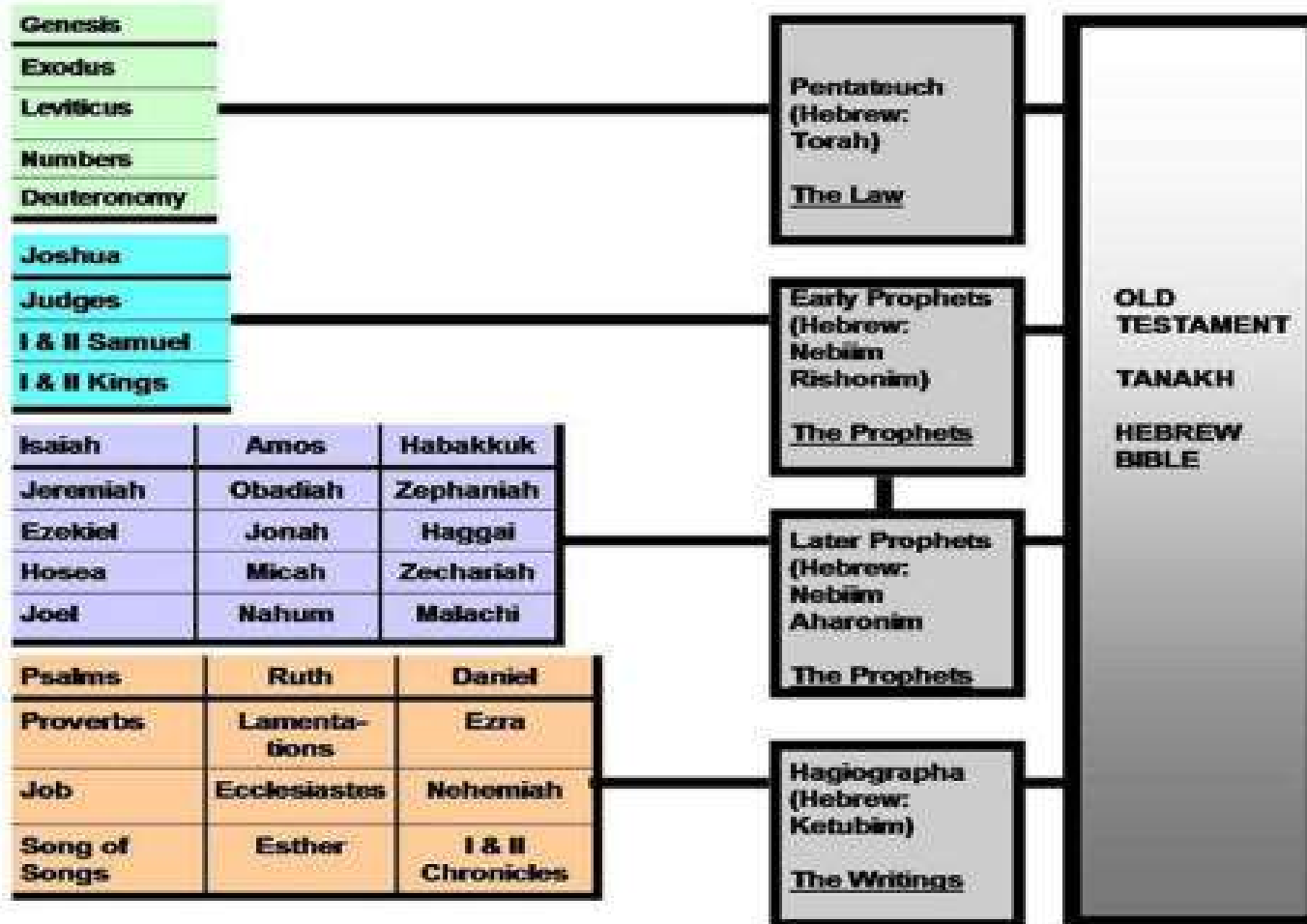
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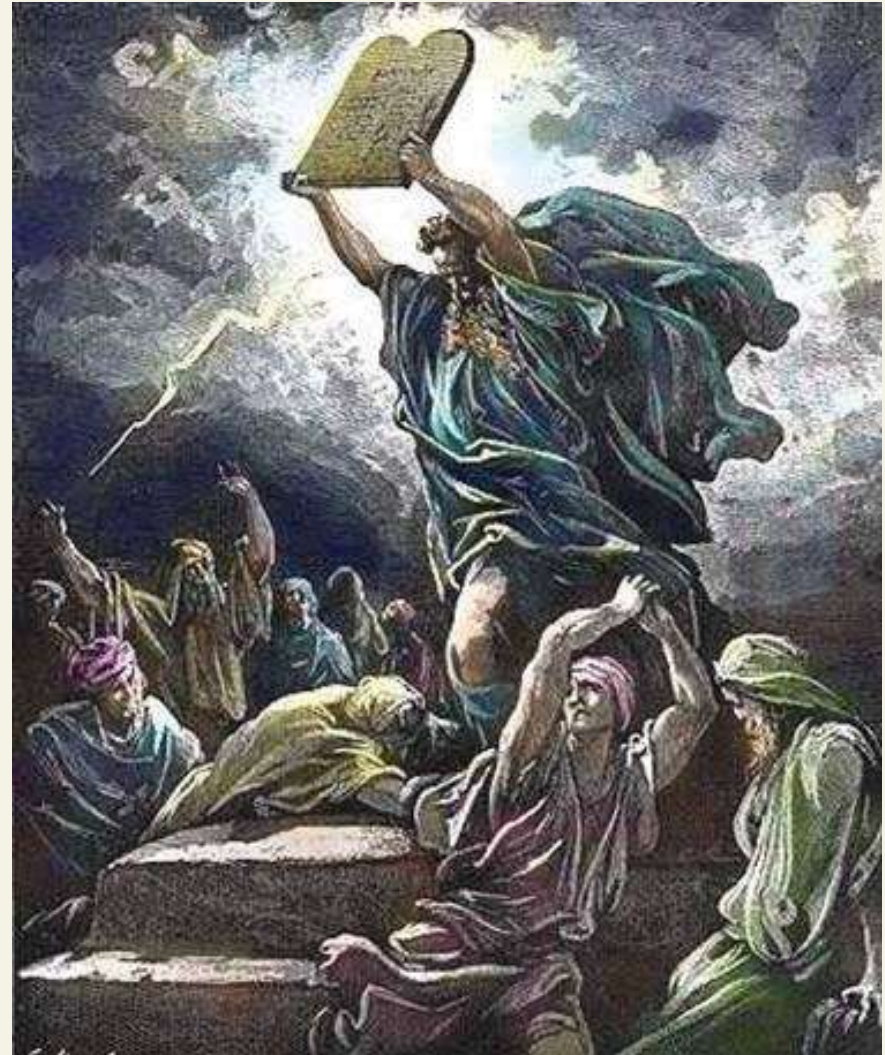


# What did the Law & the Prophets mean to the audience?

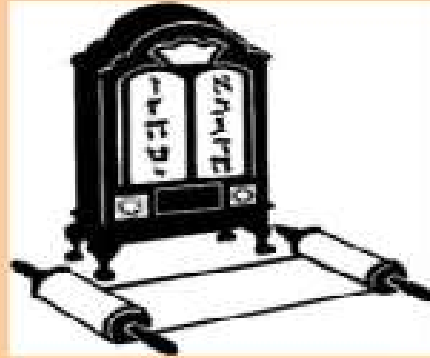


## *What did the Law encompass?*

- *Foundational & Doctrinal*
- *Moral & Ethical*
- *Feasts & Festivals*
- *Priesthood, Sacrifices & Offerings*
- *Civil & Social*
- *Community, Purity & Dietary*



# What did the Law & the Prophets mean to the audience?



## Written Tradition

### Tenach

**Torah** (Teaching)   **Neviim** (Prophets)   **Ketuvim** (Writings)

↓  
613 Mitzot  
(Commandments)  
Mitzvah  
(single commandment)

## Oral Tradition

### Talmud

**Mishnah** Collection of oral laws in 6 divisions  
**Gemara** Aramaic commentary on Mishnah showing its scriptural bases



# What did the Law & the Prophets mean to the audience?



*At the Old City Market to buy the Talmud & Mishnah*



- *God always treasured relationships with all, based on His love and grace, and each person who responds is brought into His Covenant*



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>God's Purposes</b></li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abraham</li> </ul>	<p>An everlasting covenant between me and you</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen 17:4-7</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moses</li> </ul>	<p>I brought you to myself, you will be my treasured possession</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exodus 19:4-6</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dwelling place on earth</li> </ul>	<p>I will dwell with you</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exodus 25:8</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isaiah</li> </ul>	<p>What more could I have done for my vineyard?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isaiah 5:1</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosea</li> </ul>	<p>I desire acknowledgment rather than sacrifice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosea 6:6</li> </ul>



## What did Jesus mean by "abolish" and "fulfill"?

- **Abolish**

- *To tear down or dismantle, as a building*
- *As a metaphor, to dissolve or overthrow, as in rendering something ineffective or void, as in a marriage, or a government.*

- **Fulfill**

- *Two words used*
  - *πληρώω" (plēroō) To make full, complete, or bring to its intended meaning*
  - *γένηται" (genētai): To come into being, to happen*



## What did Jesus mean by "righteousness"?

- **Righteous**
  - *The state of a person who is in conformity with God's standards, which includes being in right standing in relationship with God and people. It encompasses both the state and the actions that flow from it.*
- *God is absolutely righteous, in that He is the standard, and is always the exemplar of what righteous looks like for us to model (Psalm 11:7)*



## *Righteousness compared*

- *Holiness*
  - *Being set apart from all else*
  - *God is the One and Only*
  - *For us, we are to be set apart for God and live in worship and moral purity*
- *Perfection*
  - *God is the standard by which we are to be compared and grow towards*





# Jesus ministry leading up to His sermon

*John the Baptist (John, Matt 3)*

*Forerunner of the Messiah?*

*Temptation of Jesus, Calling of disciples*

*Say what-what about the rabbis and priests?*

*First miracle (John 2:1-11)*

*Wedding feast in Cana not Jerusalem?*

*Clearing the Temple (John 2:13-22)*

*Say what? Your authority to do this? Destroy the Temple?*

*Nicodemus (John 3)*

*THE teacher in Israel? Born again?*

*Samaritan woman, return to Galilee (John 4, Matt 4)*

*He went WHERE?*

*Healing the Official's Son (John 4)*

*In Cana with a Roman official?*

*Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5)*

*On the Sabbath? What?*



## *Am I Becoming More Righteous?*

*V 1. "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*

*Yes I AM bringing something NEW*

*Stop presuming that I have come to destroy the Law/Prophets*

*I have come from heaven to fulfill*

*The Law-what it says about who I am and what I desire*

*The Prophets- what they said about My coming*

*My intention in giving the Law is extremely important*

*Will be here in every detail until I have completed its purposes*

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*V2. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practises and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

*The kingdom of Heaven is near (Forerunner, Jesus)*

*What do kingdom dwellers look like?*

*The importance of the Law and greatness*

*Greatness not about value in the eyes of man*

*JESUS values:*

*Least: those who break and teach others the same*

*Great: those who practice and teach*



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*V3. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

*The kingdom of Heaven is about righteousness*

*Those who have been teaching you the Law are not righteous*

*They are not in the kingdom*

## ***Jesus' teaching continues....***

<b>Category</b>	<b>Old Covenant</b>	<b>References</b>	<b>Jesus</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Moral</b>	<b>10 Commandments, the Shema</b>	<b>Ex. 20:1-17, Deut 6:4, Lev 19; ..</b>	<b>...must be fulfilled..</b>	<b>Luke 24:44</b>
<b>Sacrificial Offerings</b>	<b>Abraham, Pentateuch</b>	<b>Leviticus, Numbers</b>	<b>...as a ransom for many..</b>	<b>Matt 20:28</b>
<b>Civil &amp; Social</b>	<b>Governance, justice, equity</b>	<b>Ex., Lev., Deut</b>	<b>..LOVE; Woe to you...</b>	<b>Matt 22</b>
<b>Priesthood</b>	<b>Levitical roles/responsibilities</b>	<b>Ex., Lev., Deut</b>	<b>.. greater than Temple..</b>	<b>Matt 12:6</b>
<b>Ceremonial &amp; Purity</b>	<b>Clean/unclean, purity,..</b>	<b>Ex., Lev., Deut</b>	<b>..not what goes into..</b>	<b>Mark 7:18</b>

# ***Jesus' teaching continues....***

<b>Category</b>	<b>Acts &amp; Letters</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Moral</b>	<b>...the most important is..</b>	<b>Mark 12:29</b>
	<b>..the one who loves has fulfilled the law..</b>	<b>Romans 13:8-10</b>
<b>Sacrificial Offerings</b>	<b>...but with the precious blood of Christ...</b>	<b>1 Peter 2:81-21</b>
	<b>..He is the mediator of the new covenant..</b>	<b>Hebrews 9:11-15</b>
<b>Civil &amp; Social</b>	<b>...the one who loves another has fulfilled the law</b>	<b>Romans 13:8-10</b>
<b>Priesthood</b>	<b>Seeing then that we have a High Priest...</b>	<b>Hebrews 4:14</b>
<b>Ceremonial &amp; Purity</b>	<b>..what God has made clean..to Peter</b>	<b>Acts 10:13-1</b>



## *Am I Becoming More Righteous?*

*Recognize that the New Covenant would be developed from the sermon on the Mount as the start, and continues to unfold*

*Treat every day as a journey with God as our Exemplar in Jesus, informed by His Spirit through His Word*

*Evaluate every thought, motive, decision & action as to how we are aligned with the Kingdom of Heaven principles*

*Am I & Are You: truly a member of His Kingdom?*