

“APOLOGY ACCEPTED!”

“But treat the Messiah as holy, as L-rd in your hearts; *while remaining always ready to give a reasoned answer to anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you- yet with humility and fear.*” ^{CJB} **1 Peter 3:15**

I believe that by defining what we believe and combining that with our personal testimony that we are better able to fulfill Kefa’s ‘commandment’ to *explain the hope we have within us*.

Pastor David and the Leadership have provided for all those who come to Rehoboth a statement of *what* we profess to believe as a congregation. It is the Rehoboth Statement of Faith and it can be found on one of the tables in the foyer upstairs. If you haven’t already, I encourage every one of you to pick up a copy and read through it. In fact I’ve brought a few copies with me this morning so that we can read through it together.

By going through this Statement of Faith and delving into each article it is my hope that it will help each of us to define what we believe individually and therefore better prepare each of us to witness the Truth of G-d’s plan for the salvation of man.

Let’s begin this morning by quickly reading through each article of our Statement of Faith as a group. We’ll have someone read the first article and then we can have someone else jump in and read the next one and so on and so on until we’ve made it through all eleven.

[Read through the 11 articles of Statement of Faith – inserted at the end of this study]

Obviously there is a great deal of information wrapped into these eleven statements. It is my hope and desire to open discussions on each article during our Men’s Breakfast meetings, over the course of time. For today we will begin with the first article.

“The Scriptures, both the TANAKH and the B’rit Khadashah, is G-d’s plan for salvation. That both, in their original language, are inspired of G-d and infallible and that both are relevant to our understanding of G-d’s plan for salvation.”

Looking at the statement above, we can break this down into three interrelated statements.

- a) The [**complete**] Scriptures – both the TANAKH and the B’rit Khadashah, present G-d’s plan for salvation.
 - b) Both, in their original language, are **inspired of G-d and infallible**.
 - c) And that both are relevant to our understanding of G-d’s plan for salvation.
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The first of these three statements reads; **the Scriptures – both the TANAKH and the B’rit Khadashah, present G-d’s plan for salvation**. In my notes I have inserted the word ‘complete’ because Yeshua is the completion of the Word of G-d reference Matthew 5:17.

^{CJB} **Matthew 5:17 "Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete.**

We have defined the ‘complete Scriptures’ as both the TANAKH and the B’rit Khadashah. For those who may be new to Rehoboth or unfamiliar with these terms let’s take a few moments to review what these are.

TANAKH is actually an **acronym** using the first letters of the Hebrew words for **L**aw, **P**rophets and **W**ritings.

TANAKH	=	T	for	Torah	or	Law
		N	for	N’Viim	or	Prophets
		KH	for	Kh’Tuvim	or	Writings

The **Torah** is the first five books of the Bible –B’reshith, Shemoth, Vayikra, B’Midbar & Devarim - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

These are commonly referred to as the **“Five Books of Moses.”** Printed versions of the Torah are often called Chamishah Chumshei Torah (literally “five fifths of the Torah”), and informally “a Chumash.” (can show my copy as an example)

The **N'Viim** or “Prophets” consists of eight books. This division includes the books which, as a whole, cover the chronological era from the entrance of the Israelites into the Land until the Babylonian captivity of Judah (the “period of prophecy”). However, they exclude Chronicles, which covers the same period.

The **N'Viim** are often divided into the **Earlier Prophets**, which are generally historic in nature and the **Later Prophets**, which contain more exhortational prophecies. The Books of the Prophets are: Joshua, Judges, Samuel (I & II), Kings (I & II), Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi).

The **Kh'Tuvim** or “Writings” consists of; The “Sefrei Emet” or “Books of Truth” which are the **Psalms, Proverbs and Job**; the “Five Megilot” or “Five Scrolls”: **Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther**; and finally the rest of the “Writings”: **Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles (I & II)**.

These “thirty-nine” books – when we divide Samuel, Kings & Chronicles and separate Ezra-Nehemiah into individual books – make up the TANAKH or as you may be accustomed to hearing them called – the Old Testament or Covenant.

B'RIT KHADASHAH = **B'RIT** means *Covenant* and
KHADASHAH means *New*.

Or as Rav David likes to refer to them the “Letters” which includes the four gospel accounts of; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; the letters of Peter (I & II), John (I, II & II), James, & Jude; the thirteen letters that Rav Shaul wrote; Luke’s historical narrative “Acts” and the letter to the Messianic Jews (Hebrews) the author of which only G-d knows for certain.

These combine with the TANAKH to form our Bible – the complete Scriptures which present G-d’s plan for our salvation.

NAS **1 Peter 1:10** As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful search and inquiry, ¹¹ seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.

Yeshua Himself very clearly stated:

^{NAS} **John 5:24** "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

And reading further, He goes on to say:

^{NAS} **John 5:39** "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; ..."**Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me.**

Remember that Moses wrote the Torah our first five books of the Bible. So what are some of the things that Moses wrote about the coming Messiah?

^{CJB} **Deuteronomy 18:15** "ADONAI will raise up for you a prophet like me from among yourselves, from your own kinsmen. You are to pay attention to him,

Some other 'clues' that Moses gives us are; He would be from the 'seed of a woman'; a 'descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob'; and 'from the tribe of Judah'. (Later in Scripture we are told he will be heir to the throne of David and that His throne will be 'anointed and eternal'. Isa 9:7, Ps 45:6, 7).

^{NAS} **Genesis 3:15** And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."

^{CJB} **Genesis 12:1** Now ADONAI said to Avram, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

^{NAS} **Genesis 17:19** But G-d said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

^{CJB} **Numbers 24:17** "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not soon- a star will step forth from Ya'akov, a scepter will arise from Isra'el, to crush the corners of Mo'av and destroy all descendants of Shet.

^{CJB} **Genesis 49:10** The scepter will not pass from Y'hudah, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs, until he comes to whom [obedience – "Shiloh"] belongs;* and it is he whom the peoples will obey.

When we look at the complete Scriptures we see G-d's plan for our salvation being laid before us from the very beginning.

[Pause]

Now let's look at our second statement;

Both, in their *original language*, are **inspired of G-d and infallible**.

ETYMOLOGY is the study of the history of words and how their form and meaning have changed over time.

For example, let's look at the words "apology" and "apologetics".

APOLOGETICS – (from Greek *απολογία*, "speaking in defense") is the discipline of defending a position (usually religious) through the systematic use of reason. The original Greek word for '**reasoned answer**' is '**apologia**' or 'apology'. In our opening Scripture verse Peter is telling us to 'apologize for our faith' – or - **give an apology** for the hope we have within us.

APOLOGY - In the English language, the word apology is derived from the Greek word, but its use has changed; its primary sense now refers to a plea for forgiveness for a wrong act. Implicit in this is an admission of guilt, thus turning on its head the "speaking in defense" aspect of the original concept.

In the Classical Greek legal system two key technical terms were employed: the prosecution delivered the *kategoria* (κατηγορία), and the defendant replied with an *apologia*. To deliver an *apologia* then meant making a formal speech or giving an explanation to reply and rebut the charges, as in the case of the Apostle Paul when he employs the term *apologia* in his trial speech to Festus and Agrippa when he says "I make my defense" (Acts 26:2).

[Ask someone to read Acts 26:1-3]

^{NAS} **Acts 26:1-3** And Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and **proceeded to make his defense**:^[apologeomai – 'my defense'] ² "In regard to all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I am about to make **my defense** before you today; ³ especially because you are an expert in all customs and questions among *the Jews*; therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

And *I* thank you for listening patiently to me!

Let's talk about this for a moment. How many times have we wanted to share our belief and our hope only to have the person impatiently cut us off as they realize that we are about to start *preaching the Word of G-d* to them?

[Encourage the group to participate here – seek commentary about having to 'apologize' for being a believer.]

Our opening Scripture is 1 Peter 3:15. "But treat the Messiah as holy, as L-rd in your hearts; *while remaining always ready to give a reasoned answer to anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you- yet with humility and fear.*"

To better understand what any given verse means it is important to look at the context in which it was given. What has Kefa been telling us for the first three chapters of his epistle?

"Be holy, like the Holy One who called you"; "...fervently love one another from the heart"; "...putting aside ALL malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander...";

"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts... Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles... that they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify G-d in the day of visitation."

"Submit yourselves for the L-rd's sake to every human institution..." Servants submit yourselves to your masters with all respect." "...wives be submissive to your husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives..."

"You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way... grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

"To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead."

The entire tone of this epistle is one of humble servitude. Kefa has been telling us to remember who we are IN MESSIAH, what Yeshua has done for us and to separate ourselves from our old self and its destructive ways and the ways of the world around us. The believers that he was writing to had been experiencing many hardships – much the same as each of us in the course of our lives.

How we deal with these hardships, how we submit ourselves to the sovereignty of G-d and receive His peace is like a beacon to the lost. By humbly focusing on Adonai and truly SUBMITTING unto His Spirit people will notice and be drawn to ask how we can have such peace, such hope in the light of this adversity.

Remember, Yeshua said; **"No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.** NAS John 6:44.

It is in this Spirit, one of humble servitude and faith that we are to be *prepared to give an account of our hope with gentleness and reverence.*

As the Ruach Elohim draws an individual to the Truth He may call upon us as a witness. That is our role – to testify what we believe and how He has changed our lives. We are to leave the ‘conversion’ of this person to the Holy Spirit.

Bringing us back to the word ‘apologetics’;

The legal nuance of apologetics was reframed in a more specific sense to refer to the study of the defense of a doctrine or belief. In this context it most commonly refers to philosophical reconciliation. **Religious apologetics is the effort to show that the preferred faith is not irrational, that believing in it is not against human reason and that in fact the religion contains values and promotes ways of life more in accord with human nature than other faiths or beliefs.**

So, why take the time to get into word studies and definitions? Going back to the second part of our statement in which it reads; **“Both, in their *original language*, are inspired of G-d and infallible.”** We have just seen one example of how the meaning of a word can morph over time to convey a meaning quite different than its original intent. It is imperative to point out that the original manuscripts, in the original language, in their original intent are inspired of G-d and infallible.

There is a vast amount of documentation to support trust in the copies and translations of Scripture that we have at our disposal but we need to know that these ‘copies’ are not always “inspired and infallible”.

Our third statement is ties the first two together:

The [**complete**] Scriptures – both the TANAKH and the B'rit Khadashah, present G-d's plan for salvation.

Both, in their *original language*, are **inspired of G-d and infallible**.

And that both are ***relevant to our understanding*** of G-d's plan for salvation.

We have looked at the complete Scriptures, both Old and New, and have learned that G-d has presented His plan for the salvation of man from the very beginning.

We have made the distinction that the original Scriptures, in their original language are inspired and infallible.

And now we can see that both are *relevant to our understanding* of this plan of His to redeem fallen man and bring him back into relationship with Him.

Be encouraged by these words:

^{NAS} **2 Timothy 3:14-16** You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them; and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by G-d and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

^{NAS} **2 Peter 3:14-17** Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our L-rd to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness,

^{NAS} **2 Peter 1:21** for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from G-d.

^{NAS} **1 Peter 1:25** But the word of the L-RD abides forever." And this is the word which was preached to you.

Finally, because we are a Messianic congregation it wouldn't be 'kosher' to end our study without a little Hebrew lesson. :)

One Bible translation, The Holman - *Christian Standard Bible*, translates Psalm 119:160 to read:

The entirety of Your word is truth, and all Your righteous judgments endure forever.

CSB Psalm 119:160

I like how they have stated it, “the entirety of Your Word is Truth” – meaning the complete Scriptures, both The Tanakh and The B'rit Khadashah.

Earlier we discussed the importance of the original Scripture in its original language so let's take a look at this verse in its original language.

The Hebrew text reads:

“Rosh debarcha ehmet va la olam kol mishpaht tsedakah”.

It can be literally translated as:

“Beginning Your Word Truth and to forever all Your judgments righteous.”

...or, grammatically modified to reflect our western speech patterns:

“The beginning of Your Word is Truth and forever all of Your judgments (ordinances) are righteous.”

Yes...

NAS Psalm 119:89 Forever, O L-RD, Thy word is settled in heaven.

CONCLUSION:

So, as we wrap up our study let us all pray that if The L-rd leads us to share what is *the hope that we have within us* with someone that He is drawing to Him, that they will listen patiently as we give our testimony and respond to our appeal with

“Apology Accepted”.

Note: The Hebrew word translated 'entirety' in this verse is actually 'Rosh', the most common translation for Rosh is 'head' (256). Other common uses are: 'top' (51), 'chief' (34) and 'beginning' (11).

Rehoboth Messianic Congregation Statement of Faith.

1. The Scriptures, both the TANAKH (1st Covenant) and the Brit Chadashah (New Covenant), is G-d's plan for salvation. That both, in their original language, are inspired of G-d and infallible and that both are relevant to our understanding of G-d's plan for salvation. Psalms 119:89, Proverbs 30:5-6, Jeremiah 31:31, John 5:39, 46, Romans 3:31, 1 Timothy 4:13, 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 Peter 1:21.(25? Check w/ Rabbi David)
2. Our G-d, is the G-d of Avraham (Abraham), Yitz'chak (Isaac), and Ya'akov (Jacob). Exodus 3:6, Matthew 22:32, Luke 20:37.
3. The L-RD, our G-d is one L-RD. G-d is a unity of one, the Av (Father), Ben (Son), and Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit). The Hebrew word used in the Torah for this is Echad. Deuteronomy 6:4, Psalms 110:1, Hebrews 9:14, John 1:18, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Colossians 2:9.
4. Yeshua (Jesus) is Israel's promised Messiah (Christ) and redeemer of the whole human race. Being the Son of G-d, He was born of a virgin, led a sinless life, was raised from the dead and sits at the right hand of Ha Av (The Father). He has been given all authority in heaven and earth. Through the redemptive work of His life and blood, we have salvation. Yeshua = Salvation. Psalms 110:1, Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7, 53, Matthew 1:23, 26:63-64, 28:18, John 1:29, 1 Timothy 3:16, Romans 4:25, 1 Peter 3:22.
5. Salvation is a gift of grace, through faith, in the atonement (blood) of Yeshua and that all men must accept this gift for atonement for their sins. Leviticus 17:11, John 3:16-17, 17:3, Romans 3:9-10, 23-24, Ephesians 2:8, Hebrews 9:12, 22
6. The ever present ministry and indwelling of G-d's Spirit and His working among the believers in Messiah Yeshua, upon whom He bestows spiritual gifts. Ezekiel 36:26-27, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, 12:1-13, Ephesians 4:30, Romans 8:9, Galatians 5:22-23, Hebrews 2:4.
7. There is a resurrection of all mankind, unto eternal fellowship or separation from G-d. Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:46, 22:32.
8. A mikveh (water immersion) unto Yeshua, is a step of obedience of having faith in Yeshua, as exemplified by Yochanan (John) the Immerser (Baptist). Matthew 3:16, 28:19, Acts 2:38, 10:48, Romans 6:3.
9. Both a Jewish and a non-Jewish person has access to G-d through Yeshua. This is the spiritual body of the Messiah Yeshua. John 14:6, Acts 2:17, Galatians 3:28, Ephesians 2:12-14, 3:6.
10. The appointed festivals of the L-RD are relevant in reminding us of G-d's plan of salvation for us today and of the coming back of the Messiah to rule and reign. Leviticus 23, 1 Corinthians 5:8, Colossians 2:16-17.
11. The nation of Israel was and still is chosen of G-d to be a blessing to the people of the earth. Genesis 12:2-3, 18:18, Psalms 147:19-20, Isaiah 2:1-3, Zechariah 14:16, Romans 3:1-2, 11:13-27

