



Situational Training Report

Those Who Keep the Law are Under a Curse

Shalom, TDF troops! Thank you once again for your time, determination, and participation in last month's Situational Training Exercise. For those who may just be lining up for duty or are unaware of what the "STE" is, here is a quick briefing. Each month I put forth a hypothetical "Situation" in which a "member" of YHWH'S army is confronted with an opposing statement regarding obedience to the Torah. More often than not, it is a scenario that you or someone you know has been or will be confronted with.

Upon reading the hypothetical "Situation," the "Training Exercise" is for you to put forth a scriptural defense against the apparent contradictory concepts presented in the "Situation."

The Situational Training Report is not only Colonel Klump's primary response to the "STE" but also his thanks to those who stepped into the line of fire to confront the lawless comments and/or misunderstood quotes extracted from Scripture.

Here is a look at last month's "Situation" and the "Training Exercise" orders.

Situation:

After leaving his former church to attend a home fellowship, Sergeant "Wyatt Aswool" went back to visit some old friends at his former church. Upon seeing the Sergeant, church Minister "Macon Moemoney" quickly intercepted him for interrogation regarding his return to the church. Sergeant Aswool told Minister Moemoney that he not only wanted to visit some old friends but also felt compelled to share his renewed love for YHWH, as well as his desire to keep the Torah. In response to the Sergeant's desire to keep the Torah, Minister Moemoney opened his Bible to Galatians and emphatically began lecturing the Sergeant, saying, "**Those who are under the works of the law are under a curse!**" Never having been confronted with this grenade from Galatians before, Sergeant Wyatt Aswool was left speechless!

Training Exercise:

Help Sergeant Aswool with a respectful response that is not only helpful to him but to the many other recruits who may fall prey to this passage from Galatians quoted out of context!

Colonel Klump's "STE" Response:

It appears as though Minister Moemoney is genuinely trying to convince Sergeant Aswool that his desire to keep the laws of YHWH will place him under a curse. Minister Moemoney would be surprised to know that Sergeant Aswool agrees with Galatians 3:10, although **NOT** with the erroneous interpretation proposed by Minister Moemoney!

Contrary to the interpretation implied by the Minister, this “controversial text,” quoted only in part, is referring to those who seek to be **justified** by keeping the law apart from a redeemer. If Minister Moemoney had limited his understanding to this correct interpretation of Galatians 3:10, Sergeant Aswool would have most certainly agreed! Those who attempt to secure their salvation by keeping the Torah remain under a curse!

- **Galatians 3:1–11** *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Yeshua Messiah was publicly portrayed as crucified. ²Let me ask you only this: **Did you receive the Spirit by works** of the law or by hearing with faith? ³**Are you so foolish?** Having begun by the Spirit, **are you now being perfected by the flesh?** ⁴Did you suffer so many things in vain – if indeed it was in vain? ⁵Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith ⁶just as Abraham “believed Elohim, and it was counted to him as righteousness”? ⁷Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. ⁸And the Scripture, foreseeing that Elohim would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” ⁹So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. ¹⁰**For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”** ¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before Elohim by the law, for **“The just shall live by faith.”** (ESV)*

Throughout the narrative it appears that Shaul is at his wits’ end with the Galatians, who seem to be prideful of their “accomplishments.” This behavior and attitude displayed by the Galatians has apparently clouded their recollection of the source and means by which they truly received justification. This self-righteous attitude displayed by the Galatians appears to be the motivation for Shaul’s (Paul’s) stern rebuttal. Shaul went on to remind the prideful Galatians, *“Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”*

Minister Moemoney would do well to simply examine the fruit (works) displayed by the Sergeant. In doing so, it would be evident that the motivation for **his obedience to the Torah is NOT justification**; rather, it is his natural response to the love he has for his Master.

- **Exodus 19:4–6** *Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto Myself. ⁵Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: ⁶and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. (KJV)*
- **John 14:15** *If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (ESV)*

Let us now take a look at some words spoken by servants of the Most High who kept their need for a redeemer in proper perspective.

- **Isaiah 64:6** *We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. (ESV)*
- **1 Timothy 1:15** *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Messiah Yeshua came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (KJV)*

The following parable sums up the rationale for Shaul’s rebuttal to the Galatians regarding “works of the law” (one’s ability to keep the law in order to be justified or made righteous before the eyes of YHWH).

- **Luke 18:10–14** *Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: “Elohim, I thank You that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.” ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “Elohim, be merciful to me, a sinner!” ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted. (ESV)*

Although the deeds done by the Pharisee were truly noble and good, he, like those in Galatia, failed to recognize his need for a redeemer. The tax collector’s life did not meet the pious standard of the Pharisee with all his “good” deeds, but it was the tax collector’s humble recognition of his sin that truly caused him to be exalted. In contrast to the tax collector, the prideful Pharisee, who pointed out his “good works” and the lack thereof by others, will not be exalted. The tax collector was depending upon the mercy of the Creator for his salvation, while the Pharisee was depending upon his own ability to keep the Torah for his justification.

Let us look at the contrasting parallels between the two individuals mentioned above.

- | <u>Pharisee</u> | <u>Tax Collector</u> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proudly stood near the Temple by himself • Pointed out others’ faults • Pointed out his accomplishments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humbly stood far off without lifting his eyes • Asked YHWH for mercy • Pointed out his own faults |

Like Minister Macon Moemoney, many individuals use this “controversial text” from Galatians as a proof text against keeping the Torah. This erroneous interpretation of the text suggests that those who obey YHWH’S will as expressed in the Torah are somehow under a curse for doing so. Nothing could be further from the truth! When reading any text, we must not ignore the overall context of which the text is a part. It is clear that Shaul is NOT referring to those who humbly keep the Torah in response to their salvation through the Messiah. On the contrary, Shaul is clearly referring to those who, apart from faith in Messiah, seek to be justified by their own ability to keep the law perfectly.

We must not forget that the Torah was not given as a means of justification. The Torah was given to reveal the very character of YHWH. To obey the Torah of YHWH is not a formula for justification; rather, it is a response to the love of YHWH as expressed through the redemptive work of Yeshua the Messiah.

The believer, as modeled in Scripture, is one who daily picks up his cross and crucifies his flesh so that he may serve the Holy One in spirit and in truth. Like Shaul, it is only through the daily execution of one’s animal nature that the believer can become a holy habitation in which the Spirit of Messiah can dwell. It is only then that the believer truly becomes a member of the body of Messiah.

- **Galatians 2:20** *I am crucified with Messiah: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Messiah liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of Elohim, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (KJV)*

Through his loving obedience, which must come from the heart, the believer receives blessings, not curses.

- **Deuteronomy 11:26** *Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse. (KJV)*
- **Deuteronomy 30:19** *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live. (KJV)*

The blessings promised by YHWH are intrinsic to the covenant. We, like the Minister, must understand that the Torah serves not only to mark the boundaries of the image of YHWH but also to indicate where good health, joy, peace, and life may be found. Within the boundaries of the covenant we enjoy an intimate relationship with the Creator. Sin violates this boundary, breaks the relationship, and leaves us estranged from the source of blessing.

- **Psalm 51:10–13** *Create in me a clean heart, O Elohim; and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. ¹³Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee. (KJV)*

As alluded to earlier, heartfelt obedience is the natural response to this saving relationship between YHWH and the believer. Clearly, those who have been “saved” should delight in doing the Word of YHWH.

- **1 John 5:3** *For this is the love of Elohim, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. (KJV)*
- **Psalm 119:47** *And I will delight myself in Thy commandments, which I have loved. (KJV)*
- **Romans 7:22** *For I delight in the law of Elohim after the inward man. (KJV)*

To live outside the covenant is to live outside YHWH'S hedge of protection.

- **Ecclesiastes 10:8** *He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him. (KJV)*
- **Deuteronomy 28:45–47** *Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of YHWH thy Elohim, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded thee: ⁴⁶and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever. ⁴⁷Because thou servedst not YHWH thy Elohim **with joyfulness**, and **with gladness of heart**, for the abundance of all things... (KJV)*

The texts above are directed toward those who are, in fact, under a variety of curses. Notice the cause of their condition is their lack of obedience to the commandments. It is safe to say that those mentioned above could have received blessings rather than curses by simply obeying with a cheerful heart.

Understanding this, it is clear that the believer is not under a curse for his inability to keep the commandments. Regarding the believer, the Torah, and the cursed, let us now explore a little further based on the biblical definition of sin.

- **1 John 3:4** *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. (KJV)*

Does this mean that all are under a curse? **YES**, we all have an appointment with death, which is the penalty for sin.

- **Deuteronomy 11:28** *And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of YHWH your Elohim, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known. (KJV)*
- **Romans 3:23** *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of Elohim. (KJV)*
- **1 Corinthians 15:56** *The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. (KJV)*
- **Romans 6:23** *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of Elohim is eternal life through Yeshua Messiah our Lord. (KJV)*
- **Hebrews 9:27** *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. (KJV)*

It is clear that all have sinned and are cursed to die as a result of Adam's disobedience, as well as our own. However, let us take one last look at the believer in relation to Messiah and the curse of death, which all must endure.

- **Romans 6:3** *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Yeshua Messiah were baptized into his death? (KJV)*
- **Colossians 1:12** *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. (KJV)*
- **Galatians 2:20** *I am crucified with Messiah: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Messiah liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of Elohim, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (KJV)*

If we are in Messiah, we have been raised up to **live in covenant** with YHWH, **NOT TO DISOBEY!** Notice the contrast between those who are spiritually minded and those who are carnally minded.

- **Romans 8:5–9** *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against Elohim: for it is not subject to the law of Elohim, neither indeed can be. ⁸So then they that are in the flesh cannot please Elohim. ⁹But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Elohim dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Messiah, he is none of his. (KJV)*

The Scriptures mention many curses, all of which are brought about by disobedience. All are guilty of violating the commandments, and all are deserving of these curses, especially death. **THERE ARE NO CURSES FOR OBEDIENCE IN THE SCRIPTURES**, only blessings! He who loves YHWH walks in obedience. He who follows the Messiah will pick up his cross, crucify his rebellious nature, and be risen in Messiah as a new and obedient creature!

- **Galatians 3:13** *Messiah hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. (KJV)*

The motivation for obedience is to be a light to others. It is imperative for Sergeant Aswool to share with Minister Moemoney his living testimony that testifies to the living Word!

By studying and obeying the Torah, we receive understanding, insight, and revelation regarding our relationship with YHWH and our neighbor. Keeping the feast days and caring for the poor, the widows, and the orphans are but a few examples of the selfless instructions written in the Torah. However, to gain understanding of YHWH, these instructions must become living Words, embodied and brought to life by those who obey from the heart.

- **Psalm 119:97** *Oh how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. (KJV)*
- **Psalm 49:3** *My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. (KJV)*
- **Psalm 111:10** *The fear of YHWH is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do His commandments: His praise endureth for ever. (KJV)*

In addition to gaining understanding of YHWH, we are to be a light to the world. Through our loving obedience to YHWH'S instructions, we do not become accursed, as Minister Moemoney suggests; on the contrary, we illuminate the very life and character of YHWH to the world.

- **Matthew 5:16** *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (KJV)*
- **Deuteronomy 4:5** *Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as YHWH my Elohim commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. (KJV)*
- **Deuteronomy 4:6** *Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. (KJV)*
- **Matthew 5:14** *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. (KJV)*
- **Matthew 5:15** *Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. (KJV)*

As believers, we, like Minister Moemoney, must recognize that there are blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. There are just and righteous remedies in the Torah to deter others from committing similar offenses against YHWH'S commandments! Obedience from a cheerful heart in response to salvation does not put one under a curse; rather, it only brings blessings!

In conclusion, as people of the covenant, not only are we called to be a holy (set-apart) people through obedience to the Torah; our intentions and motivation for obedience should likewise be holy. As vessels of the living Word, to violate the Torah is to distort the image of YHWH, thereby inhibiting the blessings our loving Elohim desires to grant us. Therefore, for Minister Macon Moemoney to suggest that all who

obey the Torah are under a curse is clearly a misinterpretation and misapplication of Shaul’s letter to the Galatians.

If we hold true to our commitment to keep the Torah as Moses received it and Yeshua taught it, then, at the end of the day we may honestly say:

- **2 Timothy 4:7** *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. (KJV)*

Until next month, **respect all; fear none, but ONE!**

Colonel Ken Klump