



Misfire Definition:

- 1. Of a gun or missile-** to fail to discharge or fire properly. "as she raised her pistol again, it misfired"
- 2. Of an internal combustion engine-** To undergo failure of the fuel to ignite correctly or at all. "the car would misfire occasionally from the cold"
- 3. Of a nerve cell-** To fail to transmit an electrical impulse at an appropriate moment. "as these nerves misfire and die, the muscles begin to shrink"
- 4. Of a plan-** A failure to produce the intended result. "he didn't know that his plan had misfired"

Ma'aseh Ha Shilichiyim (Acts) 15:1-41 "Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moshe, you cannot be saved." 2 This brought Sha'ul and BenNavi into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Sha'ul and BenNavi were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Yerushalayim to see the shluchim (sent-ones) and zaqanim (elders) about this question. 3 The kehillah (congregation) sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Goyim had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad. 4 When they came to Yerushalayim, they were welcomed by the kehillah and the shluchim and zaqanim, to whom they reported everything Elohim had done through them.

5 Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the perushim (separated ones) stood up and said, 'The Goyim must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moshe.' 6 The shluchim and zaqanim met to consider this question. 7 After much discussion, Kepha got up and addressed them: "Achim (brothers), you know that some time ago Elohim made a choice among

you that the Goyim might hear from my lips the message of the Besorat HaGeulah (fullness of the whole message) and believe. 8 Elohim, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Ruach HaKodesh (the breath of the Set Apart-One) to them, just as he did to us. 9 He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by emunah (knowing without initially being factually assured). 10 Now then, why do you try to test Elohim by putting on the necks of Goyim a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? 11 No! We believe it is through the Chen v'Chesed (unmerited Favour and Kindness) of Yahshua HaMoshiach that we are saved, just as they are."

12 The whole assembly became silent as they listened to BenNavi and Sha'ul telling about the signs and wonders Elohim had done among the Goyim through them. 13 When they finished, Ya'akov spoke up. "Achim," he said, "listen to me. 14 Shimon[a] has described to us how Elohim first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Goyim. 15 The words of the Navi'im (one who speaks from Elohim) are in agreement with this, as it is written:16 "'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, 17 that the rest of mankind may seek the Adonai, even all the Goyim who bear my name, says Adonai, who does these things'—18 things known from long ago. 19 "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Goyim who are turning to Elohim. 20 Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. 21 For the law of Moshe has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Shabbat."

22 Then the shluchim and zaqanim, with the whole kehillah, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Sha'ul and BeNavi. They chose Y'huda (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers. 23 With them they sent the following letter: The shluchim and zaqanim, your achim, To the Goyim believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings. 24 We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. 25 So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends BenNavi and Sha'ul— 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of Yahshua HaMoshiach. 27 Therefore we are sending Y'huda and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. 28 It seemed good to the Ruach HaKodesh and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Farewell.

30 So the men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the kehillah together and delivered the letter. 31 The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. 32 Y'huda and Silas, who themselves were navi'im, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. 33 After spending some time there, they were sent off by the believers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. 34 Notwithstanding it seemed good to Silas to stay there. 35 But Sha'ul and BenNavi remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of Adonai.

36 Some time later Sha'ul said to BenNavi, "Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of Adonai and see how they are doing." 37 BenNavi wanted to take Yochannan, also called Markus, with them, 38 but Sha'ul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. 39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. BenNavi took Markus and sailed for Cyprus,

40 but Sha'ul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the Chen v'Chesed HaShem (unmerited Favour and Kindness of the Name). 41 He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the kehillot."

Here we are, at the conclusion of ספירת העומר **Sefirat HaOmer** (Counting the Omer), a time when we have supposedly engaged in a process of inner renewal, where we have to a greater or lesser extent assessed and developed each of our 49 Divine attributes over a seven-week period. We do this to put ourselves in the best possible state to receive a renewing of Yahweh's (**seret HaDibrot ["Ten Sayings"] Ten Commandments**). They are the first ten of the 613 commandments given to Yisrael.

Some Messianic groups don't count the Omer but they observe Shavuot (Pentecost), some count it, but just count like an anticipation toward Shavuot and others count it and focus on six attributes each week in combination with each of the other attributes each day. So, we see here various levels of observance.

The question has recently come to mind, is it worth doing Yahweh's will to some degree or not at all. The answer is unequivocally yes, it is worth doing something! What sometimes happens is that we blanketly equate being lukewarm with degrees of observance. In some cases, a lack of observance does equate to laziness, there is no question of that, but in other cases, a lack of observance is due to a lack of ability.

In all aspects of life some people outperform others. This is a fact. But when a person performs to the best of his ability, there is no sin. One person who excels in one aspect of observance is deficient in another.

The entire array of ritual observance in the Torah, from the offering of animals on the alter to the tying of tefillin is in effect to occupy a person when he is not actively engaged in showing love toward his neighbour as he would himself.

Rabbi Hillel, once said, "**What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. That is the Torah. All the rest is commentary.**"

"One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29 "The most important one," answered Yahshua, "is this: 'Hear, O Yisrael: Yahweh your Elohim, Yahweh is one. 30 Love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:28-31)

The Three Pillars of the Faith

When a person joins a Messianic community, he quickly realises that he is meant to become actively involved in a yearly cycle of Holiday events that are all anchored at specific times throughout the year, these include, the weekly Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh (the New Moon), the Feasts, and the Pilgrimage based feasts. Some go for one day, some for two and three days, others seven days and some carry a more obvious connection to others. For example, Rosh HaShanah (the Head of the Year/New Year) is connected to Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) via the Ten Days of Awe From Feast of Trumpets). Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles) is connected to Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah and Pesach (Passover) is connected to Shavuot (Pentecost) via the Counting of the Omer.

All these Holidays with the exception of the minor holidays, being the Ten Days of Awe and the Succoth middle days, all carry a common characteristic, they are a Holy Convocation (A Set-Apart Gathering). In Hebrew this is called a **"Miqra Kodesh"**. The holiest of all these days is the Weekly Shabbat. Yes, the weekly Shabbat is believed to be even Holier than Yom Kippur often called the Holiest Day of the Year. One would think that Shabbat was the least holy because of its frequency compared to the annually observed days. The observance of one Holiday imbues the other Holy Days with power.

"Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, a holy convocation; you shall do no work on it: it is the Sabbath to Yahweh in all your dwellings." (Leviticus 23:3)

"If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and Yahweh's holy day honourable, and if you honour it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in Yahweh, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Ya'akov.' The mouth of Yahweh has spoken." (Isaiah 53:12-13)

The Shabbat is one of three chief pillars of our faith. The other two being the Name, and the Covenant.

"Let no foreigner who is bound to Yahweh say, 'Yahweh will surely exclude me from his people.' And let no eunuch complain, 'I am only a dry tree.' For this is what Yahweh says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant-- to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever. And foreigners who bind themselves to Yahweh to minister to him, to love the name of Yahweh, and to be his servants, all who keep the Shabbat without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant-- these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." (Isiah 56:3-7)

Taking on the covenant is a lifetime commitment. It's best done slow and methodically. Someone who takes on too much too quick, can be in danger of experiencing an overload and drop everything quickly too. Some people move fast, others slowly. We all make mistakes in our walk. It's a part of our growth process in Messiah. Practice your faith in Messiah quietly.

— NAZARENES OF AUSTRALIA —



“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.” (Matthew 6:1-2)

The kingdom is not so much physical than it is an attitude, an outlook, a code of conduct.

“But seek first the kingdom of Elohim and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:33)

This means to aim for the Kingdom rather than aim at the Kingdom’s statutes. The Torah isn’t our salvation; it’s the maintenance book that preserves our Salvation in King Messiah Yahshua. By seeking the Kingdom first, we pick up techniques on being its citizen along the way. New converts should not be bombarded with the too much information too early. We should set before them the glory of the Coming Kingdom. A healthy appetite for the Kingdom is the foundation for a healthy appetite for participation in it. A desire to really participate brings with it a desire to learn and a hunger to observe. With that said, a basic series of obligations is long overdue and there is a definite need to enumerate them. The following information is ‘a get to,’ not ‘a got to.’

The Johnny Come Lately Covenant Keepers

As soon as a Hebrew child could speak he would learn the Shema, and then he was taught the Five Books of Moses. Leading up to the age of five he would learn the shapes and sounds of each Hebrew letter and learn what they meant individually and in word form. From the age of five to ten he would learn to read the whole Torah scroll with no vowels. From the age of ten to the age of fifteen, a child would learn the Mishnah (that is the Oral Torah or the correct interpretation of the Torah). At fifteen years, the child would learn the Talmud; the expounded teachings of the Torah (that is the origins of the interpretations of the Torah). By the time he is eighteen, a Jewish child has a very good knowledge of the Torah; a knowledge that would put anyone of us to complete shame.

This is all well and good, but how does a believer who has come to the faith so late in life get to an acceptable level of understanding compared to a Jew?

The words **‘what advantage has the Jew?...much in every way...’** spoken by Rabbi Sha’ul in the 3rd Chapter of Romans becomes all too shockingly real. Scripture places much emphasis on who’s a Jew and who isn’t a Jew for good reason.

“A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person’s praise is not from other people, but from Yahweh.” (Romans 2:28, 29)

Have you ever wondered why these verses are so concerned about who is a real Jew?

“What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of Elohim.” (Romans 3:1-2)

The Book of Revelations even mentions that there will be those who claim to be Jews but are not.

“I will make those who are of the synagogue of HaSatan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars--I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.” (Revelations 3:9)

Why would the so-called New Testament care who is a Jew if they are a rejected people?

Interesting....

Because a man is unable to turn back time or change the circumstances of his birth, whether having grown up in a Gentile home or having just been plain rebellious, a convert is forced to look at the best example that history has of a late starter in Torah.

The best role-model for a mature age convert is ironically one of the most rejected Jewish Sages in the Messianic movement at present; that is Rabbi Akiva.

Rabbi Akiva was born to a proselyte and known as an ‘am ha-aretz le-mitzvot (Hebrew: [‘people of the land’] i.e. ignoramus) during his first forty years. During that period, he used to say:

"O that I would find a talmid chacham (Torah scholar) and bite him like a donkey" (Talmud tractate Pesachim, 49b).

Unfortunately, most Messianic Movements focus on Rabbi Akiva’s endorsement of a false Messiah near the end of his ministry, but they fail to go into any further analysis into this great man’s origin and life service to Yahweh. After having endorsed Simon bar Kokhba (bar Kozeba) as the Messiah, Rabbi Akiva withdrew his support for him after a lengthy discussion in which it became evident that Bar Kokhba was going to breach Torah by forming an alliance with the Samaritans to repel a vast Roman assault on Jerusalem. Akiva was eventually caught by Rome and flayed alive in front of his students. Despite this, we should no more overlook Rabbi Akiva’s contribution to Torah any more than King Solomon who wrote the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs.

How did an unlearned Jewish convert known as an ignoramus till the age of forty turn everything around to eventually become a revered scholar?

Water Dripping on a Stone

One day, Akiva was out tending the flocks of a wealthy Jew and whilst resting he noticed a how dripping water made a hole in a rock. **“If water can make a hole and penetrate into a rock,”** thought the shepherd, **“then surely the Torah can enter into my heart.”** This is exactly the same attitude that every person seeking to learn Torah should adopt.

Rabbi Akiva never learnt Torah like the afore mentioned average Orthodox Jewish child. He divided up his time in three parts as the Talmud outlines. The first portion is to learn Scripture, the second portion is to learn the Mishnah (the end result of the interpretations) and the third portion is the actual understanding of the background to all the laws in Torah. This would go on as long as it would take for the occupant to have a natural knowledge of the Scriptures. From this point on a student can delve more extensively in the Talmud, which gives reasoning behind the Scriptures causing a student to attach himself more securely to the Scriptures. Now we must bear in mind that Akiva already knew Hebrew, so Hebrew would be learned in the first portion along with learning Scripture.

The Obligations of non-Jewish adults coming into the Covenant

What if an adult doesn't seem to have the ability to retain Torah and on top of that has limited time to study? Such a person is only obligated to set aside a specific time in the day and in the night to learn Torah. One should immediately get up to pray and then spend a bit of time in study.

There is no point in delving into detail into the Scriptures (studying Rashi, Talmud or Mishnah) if an adult doesn't know what to do according to Torah practically. There are laws for getting up and conducting oneself in an appropriate manner in the morning. There are food laws that extend beyond refraining from eating pork and prawns. There are laws for the Sabbath that extends beyond refraining from work, resting and meeting together.

A student is obliged to become as familiar as possible with all these basic laws before he gets into technical examinations or discussions in matters of Torah. One of the most embarrassing things in this movement is the vast number of returning Ephraimites who get embroiled in arguments about deep Torah matters and at the same time have no idea about daily observance of the Torah.

There are specific blessings for types of foods. There are laws for dressing, speaking and thinking. There are laws for working and right ethics. These are the matters that should be of greatest concern to the student of Torah, not whether Barach Obama is the anti-Christ or spreading awareness of the nearness of legalization of same sex marriage.

Daily personal refining of one's Torah observance in practical matters will hasten Moshiach, not posting articles about how a bunch of tornados somewhere is the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Every day is a potential last day on earth for a believer and each moment should be lived in such a way that goodness is drawn down rather than engaging in well intentioned debates over how many chambers there are in Gehenom and which angels preside over them.

Conclusion

We have always had people within our faith from different backgrounds and different levels of ability. People in our faith have always gravitated toward two camps, the keen punters who want to do everything and the cautious, those who are weary of taking on new things. There are also those who are not as strong as others.

We will continue to misfire in this faith if we do not stop and go back to help the straggler.

“Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarrelling over disputable matters.” (Romans 14:1)

“We who are strong ought to bear with the shortcomings of the weak and not to please ourselves.” (Romans 15:1)

“And we urge you, brothers, to admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, and be patient with everyone.” (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

“To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men, so that by all possible means I might save some of them.” (1 Corinthians 9:22)