

Correcting the Translation of One Word Can Make a Big Difference

People have been arguing about who Jesus was, what he believed, what he taught, or even if he ever existed, since 24 CE (AD). So, the minute you saw the word “Jesus” your brain connected what you believe about “Jesus” (your bundles of associations). If you haven’t read articles I have written about Jesus (Yeshua), I know that you will not accurately understand this article. Please make sure your vocabulary includes the words below before you continue.

I am sure you remember that famous question -- *Which came first, the chicken or the egg?*
In this case the question is:

Which came first, the canon (Sacred Scriptures) or the institution?

The answer to this question is **based on facts**, not **beliefs**. People in positions of power in institutions (religious and political) chose scrolls (books) that agreed with their belief systems. Institutions created the **Tanakh** (*Jewish Scriptures*) and the **Bible** (*Christian Scriptures*).

1. **Canon** refers to a collection of rules or texts that are considered to be authoritative by an institution. One of the first things **Exploring the Bible Teams** do is identify the institutions that **“canonized their versions of the Bible or Tanakh.”**
2. **Torah** (first section of **Tanakh**) – *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy*. (Canonized in 450 BCE.)
3. **Prophets** (second section of **Tanakh**) – *Joshua, Judges, First & Second Samuel, First & Second Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*. (Canonized around 300 BCE.)

There were other scrolls that were viewed as sacred, which were read at the Temple and in synagogues. They would become the third section of the **Tanakh** around 90 CE and are called the **Writings**. Most of these books were well-known at the time of Jesus.

4. **Writings** – *Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and First & Second Chronicles*.
5. **New Testament** – A Festal Letter of Roman Catholic Bishop Athanasius (367 CE) listed the twenty-seven books now found in New Testaments. This list was formally ratified by the Roman Catholic Council of Hippo (393 CE), and the Third Council of Carthage (397 CE). The two Roman Catholic Councils “canonized this list of books. There were also churches that “canonized” lists with different books.
6. **Old Testament** – The books of the Tanakh (arranged in a different order). These books were held as sacred Scripture by the members of the Jesus Movement until after the Romans destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE.

BHC Exploration #8

Now you have the **vocabulary words** required to accurately understand what Jesus taught his disciples (students) in Matthew 5:17a. The words below are from the *New King James Version*.

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets.

The word "**Law**" is not correct. When we reconstruct the Hebrew words Jesus spoke, the correct translation is "**Torah**." Now I will replace the words "**Torah**" and "**Prophets**" with their **vocabulary meanings** above. Here is the context in which they appear, Matthew 5:17-18.

Do not think that I came to destroy Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy or Joshua, Judges, First & Second Samuel, First & Second Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Torah till all is fulfilled.

Is this the way you understood Matthew 5:17-18 before you read this article? I need to add a few more words to your vocabulary before you will be able to hear the words that the original Jesus taught: *destroy, fulfill, "for assuredly," jot, and tittle*. I will do that in my next email.

You must correctly understand these verses in order to understand how Jesus taught "**The Creator's Alliance**" to his followers.

Shalom,
Jim Myers

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