

What Did Yeshua Mean by “Fulfill”?

Matthew 5:17–20, “Not One Jot or Tittle,” and the Law and the Prophets in the Kingdom of Heaven

A printable companion for tracing Matthew 5:17–20, the Greek words behind “abolish” and “fulfill,” Yeshua’s six examples, the New Covenant, and the meaning of kingdom righteousness.

Use this packet beside the full Bible study. Read the passages. Write what the text says. Test the claims. Build your own conclusion.

Don’t take my word for it—Open your Bible.

openyourbible.org

BEFORE YOU STUDY

What Do I Believe Right Now?

Write your present understanding before you begin. You can return to this page at the end.

When Yeshua says He came to “fulfill” the Law and the Prophets, what do you think He means?

Does “fulfill” mean the Law ended? Why or why not?

Do you believe Yeshua changed any Torah commands or their covenantal application?

What passage most strongly shapes your current answer?

What assumptions are you bringing into this study?

THE CORE PASSAGE

Read Matthew 5:17–20 as One Argument

Read Matthew 5:17–20 slowly. Do not stop at verse 17.

What does Yeshua explicitly say He did **not** come to do?

What does He say He **did** come to do?

What does verse 18 say about heaven and earth?

What does verse 18 say about the smallest written detail of the Law?

What does verse 19 say about loosening a least commandment?

What does verse 20 say about the righteousness of Yeshua's disciples?

Write the flow of the paragraph in your own words.

Verse 17: _____

Verse 18: _____

Verse 19: _____

Verse 20: _____

Why is it dangerous to interpret verse 17 without verses 18–20?

THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

What Exactly Is Yeshua Fulfilling?

Read Matthew 5:17; Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:34–40.

Where does Matthew use the phrase “the Law and the Prophets”?

What does that phrase appear to include?

Why is “fulfill the Law and the Prophets” broader than simply “obey every command perfectly”?

What kinds of things do the Prophets contain besides commands?

How do Matthew 7:12 and Matthew 22:40 help you see the ethical center of the Law and Prophets?

WORD STUDY

Abolish — καταλύω (kataluō)

Read Matthew 5:17 again.

Write the Greek term:

List the ideas carried by the word in this context: dismantle, destroy, tear down, nullify, overthrow, or similar.

Why does Yeshua begin with “Do not think...”?

What misunderstanding does He appear to be preventing?

If “fulfill” meant the same thing as “abolish,” what problem would that create in Yeshua’s contrast?

WORD STUDY

Fulfill — πληρόω (plēroō)

Read Matthew 3:15 and Matthew 5:17. Then review Matthew’s repeated “fulfilled” statements.

Write the Greek term:

List the meanings that fit its range: fill, make full, complete, carry into effect, bring to realization, accomplish.

In Matthew 3:15, what does Yeshua say must be “fulfilled”?

Does “fulfill all righteousness” mean “abolish righteousness”? Why not?

How does Matthew’s repeated use of fulfillment language help you interpret Matthew 5:17?

Write a working definition of **plēroō** in Matthew’s Gospel.

VERSE 18

“Until All Comes to Pass”

Read Matthew 5:18 carefully.

Verse 17 uses **plēroō**. What verb idea appears in verse 18 instead?

Write the phrase in your own words: “until all happens / comes to pass.”

What are the two “until” statements in the verse?

What does Yeshua say about the smallest letter or stroke?

What is an **iota**?

What is a **keriaia**?

How does the “heaven and earth” language affect the idea that Torah simply expired during Yeshua’s earthly ministry?

Why is it important that verse 18 does **not** simply repeat the word *plēroō*?

VERSE 19

Least Commandments and “Loosening”

Read Matthew 5:19.

What word connects verse 19 to the verses before it?

What Greek verb idea lies behind “break,” “loosen,” or “set aside”?

How is **lyō** related to **kataluō** from verse 17?

What does Yeshua say about the person who loosens a least commandment and teaches others to do so?

What does He say about the person who does and teaches?

What are the two main ways interpreters understand “these commandments”?

Which reading currently makes the best sense to you, and why?

VERSE 20

Exceeding Righteousness

Read Matthew 5:20 and then Matthew 5:21–48.

What standard does Yeshua set for His disciples?

Does the rest of Matthew 5 make righteousness easier or deeper?

What areas does Yeshua bring into view beyond outward behavior?

Complete the thought:

Kingdom righteousness is not merely _____

It also reaches _____

How does verse 20 prepare you for the “You have heard... but I say” sections?

YESHUA’S SIX EXAMPLES

Murder, Adultery, Divorce

Read Matthew 5:21–32.

Murder

What command does Yeshua begin with?

What does He expose beneath the outward act?

How does this deepen the command rather than weaken it?

Adultery

What does Yeshua address beneath the physical act?

How does this move righteousness into the heart?

Divorce

Compare Matthew 19:1–9 with Deuteronomy 24:1–4.

What does Yeshua say Moses permitted because of hardness of heart?

Where does Yeshua go to establish the deeper purpose?

What does the divorce discussion teach you about fulfillment and creation purpose?

YESHUA’S SIX EXAMPLES

Oaths, Retaliation, Enemies

Read Matthew 5:33–48.

Oaths

What kind of truthfulness does Yeshua require?

Why might radical truthfulness make manipulative oath systems unnecessary?

“Eye for Eye”

What did proportional justice limit?

How does Yeshua move His disciples beyond personal retaliation?

Love Your Enemies

Where does “love your neighbor” come from?

What does Yeshua require toward enemies and persecutors?

Why does He connect this to the character of the Father?

What do these three examples show about kingdom righteousness?

WHAT IS YESHUA DOING?

Compare the Six Examples

Fill in the chart in your own words.

Murder: Yeshua moves from outward act to _____

Adultery: Yeshua moves from outward act to _____

Divorce: Yeshua reaches behind Mosaic concession to _____

Oaths: Yeshua calls for _____

Retaliation: Yeshua moves disciples beyond _____

Enemies: Yeshua extends love toward _____

What patterns do you see?

Does Yeshua handle every Torah passage in exactly the same way?

What words best describe what He is doing: correcting, intensifying, revealing, recovering creation purpose, transforming application, or something else?

LAW, LOVE, AND WEIGHT

Summary Does Not Mean Cancellation

Read Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:34–40; Matthew 23:23.

Where do Yeshua's two greatest commandments come from?

Love Yehovah: _____

Love neighbor: _____

What does Yeshua say the Law and Prophets do in relation to these two commands?

What are the "weightier matters" named in Matthew 23:23?

Does Yeshua say weightier matters make lighter matters meaningless?

What is the difference between **summary** and **cancellation**?

How does love function as an interpretive center without becoming lawlessness?

NEW COVENANT

Fulfillment Does Not Mean Sinai Never Changes

Read Jeremiah 31:31–34; Hebrews 7–10; Matthew 26:26–29.

What does Jeremiah say will be written on the heart?

How is the New Covenant described as different from the covenant made at the Exodus?

What major covenant realities change in Hebrews?

Priesthood: _____

Sacrifice: _____

Sanctuary: _____

Mediation: _____

Why does changed covenant administration **not** mean Yehovah's earlier revelation was wrong?

How might sacrifice be a good example of fulfillment rather than simple abolition?

BUILD THE DEFINITION

What Does “Fulfill” Need to Include?

Check each idea your definition must account for, then write how.

Yeshua’s faithful obedience

Prophetic promises coming to realization

Biblical patterns reaching their Messiah-centered reality

Torah’s deeper righteous intention

Recovery of creation purpose

Real New Covenant transformation

Now finish the sentence:

Yeshua fulfills the Law and the Prophets by...

TEST THE CLAIMS

Slow Down and Check What We Hear

Respond briefly to each statement.

“Fulfill means abolish.”

“Fulfill simply means Yeshua obeyed perfectly.”

“Verse 18 says the Law lasted only until Jesus fulfilled it.”

“The Law disappeared at the cross.”

“Jesus only corrected Pharisaic traditions.”

“Jesus changed Torah, therefore He abolished it.”

“Jesus replaced all the commandments with love.”

“If Yeshua did not abolish Torah, every Sinai command must operate identically today.”

TEST THE TORAH-OBSERVANT SHORTCUT

Our Side Needs to Be Tested Too

“Fulfill means Yeshua merely showed us how to obey Moses.”

“Every ‘but I say to you’ only corrects Pharisaic oral tradition.”

“Matthew 5:18 means covenant administration can never change.”

“Least commandments means every command has equal weight.”

“Yeshua’s teaching is just Moses repeated.”

Write the principle you want to remember:

We do not honor Torah by _____

And we do not honor Yeshua by _____

COFFEE BREAK REFLECTION

Pause and Talk It Through

Answer conversationally. This is your space to process the study.

What surprised you most about Matthew 5:17–20?

What did you learn from the difference between **plēroō** in verse 17 and **ginomai** in verse 18?

Which of Yeshua’s six examples challenged your previous understanding most?

Where are you most tempted to choose the easy answer: “everything ended” or “nothing changed”?

How does Yeshua’s teaching make righteousness more personal for you?

FINAL RESPONSE

What Did Yeshua Mean by “Fulfill”?

Return to the answers you wrote before the study and compare them with your conclusion now.

What does Yeshua explicitly deny?

What does He claim to do instead?

What does Matthew 5:18–20 add to the meaning of verse 17?

What genuine continuity do you see?

What genuine transformation do you see?

What is your final definition of **fulfill**?

Which passages most strongly shaped your conclusion?

PRAYER AND APPLICATION

What Will I Do With What I Learned?

Write a response to Yehovah.

How has this study changed the way you read Matthew 5?

What part of Yeshua's kingdom righteousness do you most need to practice right now?

What passage do you want to study again before considering your conclusion settled?

How can you discuss this topic with believers who disagree without shrinking either Torah or Yeshua?

NOTES

Extra Space

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.