

KINGDOM VIOLENCE?

MATTHEW 11:12

by Avram Yehoshua

[The Seed of Abraham](#)

I don't think I'm the only one who has grimaced upon reading Matthew 11:12, where the Lord speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven *suffering violence and the violent taking it by force*. What did Jesus mean? Resorting to the commentaries doesn't help. It seems that knowledge of Greek doesn't help them to understand what Yeshua (Jesus) meant: 'violent men' would take the Kingdom by force. Really? Doesn't Yeshua tell us to turn the other cheek and love our enemy? How can violent words and actions be reconciled with Yeshua's words in Mt. 5:3 where He says, 'Blessed are the *poor* in spirit, for *theirs* is the Kingdom of Heaven'? *Violent men* and *poor in spirit* are not synonymous. While some of what the commentators write doesn't seem unreasonable, none strike the Chord of Truth, and actually, all lead us down a wrong trail. Only when the Greek text is translated back into what Yeshua said in Hebrew¹ are we

¹ For an excellent book on why Hebrew was the language of Yeshua and the Apostles, see David Bivin and Roy Blizzard's, *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2001). Biblical scholarship has had to take into account many recent (20th century) findings that have determined that Hebrew was the spoken language in Israel at the time of the Apostles. For centuries many thought that it was Aramaic, but even renowned Aramaic scholars like Matthew Black and Max Wilcox concede that 'Hebrew was' the 'living language' and the 'normal vehicle of expression' (ibid., pp. 12-13). This understanding rests on a number of findings in different fields:

1. The discovery of the bar Kochba letters, dated at 134-135 AD, in which Hebrew is the language.
2. Much of the literature of Qumran is in Hebrew and not Aramaic (ibid., pp. 14, 20-21). The ratio of Hebrew to Aramaic is 'nine to one' and it's most likely that the Aramaic found was written much earlier, when Aramaic was the primary spoken language of the returning captives from Babylon (ibid., p. 29).
3. There's also the witness of the early Church Father Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Turkey (70-163 AD) who wrote, 'Matthew put the words of the Lord in an ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language' (ibid., pp. 23-24).
4. The three Synoptic Gospels, having been translated into modern Hebrew from the Greek text (for Israelis today), contain many places where the Greek words form *perfect Hebrew syntax and idiomatic expressions* (ibid., pp. 53-65). This confirms Papias because it seems that Matthew, who wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, was the first to write a Gospel, in 44 AD, about 16 years before Luke and Mark, who based their Gospels from Matthew.
5. Of the 215 ancient coins in the Israel Museum covering a period of roughly 450 years, from the fourth century BC until 135 AD, '99 have Hebrew inscriptions' and 'only one has an Aramaic inscription' (ibid., p. 33; the other 115 coins are Roman).
6. Early Rabbinic literature was all written in Hebrew (ibid., p. 43).
7. The New Testament declares Hebrew to be the language of Yeshua and the Apostles. Unfortunately, scholars and translators have said that what the New Testament 'really meant' was Aramaic. That Aramaic was used is not to be denied, but just as an Englishman can say, '*Bon appétit*,' without anyone suggesting that all of Britain speaks French as its *primary* language, so too, could Yeshua use Aramaic words and phrases (Mk. 5:41; 7:34; Jn. 1:42). Some example of Hebrew being the common language in Yeshua's time are:
 - a. Pilate's inscription over the head of Yeshua being in *Hebrew*, Latin and Greek (Jn. 19:20).
 - b. After the resurrection Mary speaks to Yeshua in Hebrew (Jn. 20:16; 'Rabboni').

given a translation that allows us to see not only what Yeshua actually said that day, but also what He was clearly alluding to. His Jewish followers listening to Him certainly understood what He meant.

The following are eight English translations from the Greek text of Matthew 11:12 that don't understand the need to translate the verse back into Hebrew. The first five speak of the *Kingdom suffering violence*, while the last three have the Kingdom being taken by violence (violent men).

1. KJV: 'From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven *suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.*'
2. NRSV: 'From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven *has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.*'² (The NRSV also has an alternate reading in the margin: the kingdom of heaven 'has been coming *violently.*')³
3. NKJV: 'And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven *suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*'
4. NASB: 'From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven *suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.*'
5. Jewish New Covenant: 'From the time of Yochanan (John) the Immerser (Baptizer) until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been *suffering violence; yes, violent ones are trying to snatch it away.*'⁴
6. Kenneth Wuest: 'Indeed, from the days of John the Baptizer until this moment, the kingdom of heaven is being *taken by storm, and the strong and forceful ones claim it for themselves eagerly.*'⁵
7. KJV *Interlinear*: 'But from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of the heavens *is taken by violence, and (the) violent seize it.*'⁶
8. Nestle-Aland *Interlinear*: 'And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of the Heavens *is forcibly entered and violent men seize it.*'⁷

c. Paul says that Yeshua spoke to him in Hebrew (Acts 26:14) and,

d. Paul spoke to the crowd at the Temple in Hebrew (Acts 21:40; 22:2). There are also a number of other specific references to the Hebrew language (Jn. 5:2; 19:13, 17; Rev. 9:11; 16:16).

ISBE states, With the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1947f.), 'it became obvious that Hebrew was indeed' the language of Jesus. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, General Editor; Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, Associate Editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 233, IV *Aramaic and the NT*.

ISBE also says, "In a compelling article on 'Hebrew in the Days of the Second Temple' (*JBL*, 79 [1960], 32-47), J. M. Grintz has offered...evidence to show that Hebrew, rather than Aramaic, lay behind the Gospel of Matthew. A number of expressions in the Gospel can only be explained on the basis of Hebrew, like the use of 'Israel' (Aram. regularly uses 'Jews') and 'gentiles' (Aram. has no word like 'gôyîm')." The spoken language of Jesus and the Apostles was Hebrew, not Aramaic.

² Robert K. Brown and Philip W. Comfort, Translators, J. D. Douglas, Editor, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990), pp. 38-39.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁴ David H. Stern, *Jewish New Covenant* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Covenant Publications, 1991), p. 15.

⁵ Kenneth S. Wuest, Translator, *The New Testament, An Expanded Translation* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961, reprinted, 1998), p. 27.

⁶ George Ricker Berry, Editor, *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2000), pp. 27-28.

⁷ Brown, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament*, pp. 38-39. As a side note, notice that both Interlinears (Berry and Brown) translate the Kingdom as the Kingdom of the *Heavens*, and not 'Heaven.' In Hebrew it's always in the plural: Heavens.

The first five translations for the Kingdom of Heaven have it under attack (the Greek verb being passive), while the last three speak of entry into the Kingdom being taken by force (the same Greek verb being middle voice). Some teach that the violence to the Kingdom was done by either the Zealots, who wanted to forcibly make Jesus King in order to defeat Rome, or by the antagonists of Yeshua, like Herod and the Pharisees, who wanted to snuff out the Kingdom. Theologian R. T. France states that the,

‘violence began with the time of John’s preaching because that was when the kingdom of heaven began to be proclaimed.’⁸

France goes on to say there are two possible understandings of what this *violence* might be:

1. ‘P. W. Barnett argues that Jesus refers to the *political* activists among his (and John’s) followers who tried to divert his mission into one of national liberation, a movement which reached its climax after the feeding of the 5,000.’
 - a. France discounts this theory, though, stating, ‘It is not clear however, why this issue should be introduced here, unless (and this must be speculation), John’s followers had moved increasingly in a political direction, causing Jesus, while endorsing John’s message, to dissociate himself from his ‘violent’ followers.’⁹
2. ‘More commonly Jesus is understood to refer to the violent opposition encountered by ‘the kingdom of heaven,’ already seen in the arrest and imprisonment of its herald, and more ominously foreshadowed in the growing official opposition to Jesus himself. In the context of John’s question from prison this seems the more relevant sense. So while John was the last of the old order, his fate was the foretaste of the conflicts which are already beginning to affect the new order.’¹⁰

Could the Kingdom of Heaven, which Yeshua told Pilate was not of this Earth (John 18:36), actually be under attack by wicked, violent men? Sure it could, just as violence would come upon Yeshua, but this isn’t what Yeshua spoke of that day.

Did John have a lot of political disciples?¹¹ It seems possible, and this is a major problem with passages like this that commentators really don’t understand. They create (i.e. make up) a scenario that seems to be plausible, but in this case, is diametrically opposed to the words, character and lifestyle of Yeshua.

The ‘violence’ that France mentions, of John being imprisoned, is not pertinent. John wasn’t imprisoned

⁸ R. T. France, M.A., B.D., Ph.D., The Rev. Leon Morris, M.Sc., M.Th., Ph.D., General Editor, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Matthew* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), p. 195.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 195-196.

¹¹ In John 6:14, after the feeding of the 5,000, because the miracle was similar to Moses ‘giving’ Manna to Israel in the Wilderness, and the King of Israel, the Messiah, being ‘like Moses’ (Dt. 18:15-19), the Jewish people realized the significance of the miraculous bread and wanted to make Yeshua the King of Israel: “Then those men, when they had seen the sign (miracle) that Jesus did, said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”” (John 6:14 NKJV) God said to Moses, “I will raise up for them a Prophet *like you* (Moses) from among their brethren, and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.” (Deuteronomy 18:18)

John 6:15 does say that they were *about* to come and take Him by force, but Yeshua easily alluded them and went up to the mountain to be alone. The next day they found Yeshua in Capernaum and He spoke to them about eating His flesh (Jn. 6:53). He lost so many disciples because of that saying that He turned around to Peter and asked him if he, too, wanted to leave Him (John 6:66-69). That seems to be the only time ‘force’ is mentioned in wanting to make Yeshua King, and it didn’t amount to anything. Of course, someone might argue that some of the citizens of Nazareth tried to throw Him off the cliff, but that isolated incident wasn’t repeated anywhere else and so it cannot be inserted into Mt. 11:12.

for preaching the coming Kingdom, but for rebuking Herod for his adultery, a very ‘Old Testament’ commandment (Ex. 20:14; Mt. 14:3-4; Mk. 6:17-18; Lk. 3:19-20). That there was ‘violence’ or tension between Yeshua and the Pharisees, etc., who prevented Jews from following the Messiah by their lies about Him (e.g. ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul;’ Mt. 12:24; 23:13), is evident to anyone who reads the four accounts of His Ministry in Israel 2,000 years ago, but how that fits into understanding what Yeshua said about the Kingdom either suffering violence or being taken by violence, leaves much to be desired. The three Greek words that the sentence turns on are:

1. βιάζεται *biazetai*: The Kingdom of Heaven is being *violently attacked* or *forcefully entered* or *advancing*. From *biazo*, “to force, use violence;”¹² or to “inflict violence on.”¹³
2. βιασταὶ *biastai*: Violent men¹⁴ seize it (to destroy it), or use “force...to obtain its privileges with the utmost eagerness and effort.”¹⁵
3. ἀρπάξουσιν *harpazusin*: The violent men “take it by force” (KJV), or “seize it” (KJV Interlinear). From the verb *harpazo*, “To snatch away,”¹⁶ “to seize, carry off by force...claim for oneself eagerly, to snatch out or away.”¹⁷

France states that the term ‘men of violence’ (#2, βιασταὶ *biastai*; violent men),

“is an unusual word which always conveys a bad sense...the verb is probably to be read as passive, not middle: it refers to violence inflicted on the kingdom of heaven, which Jesus condemns (take by force, *harpazo*, normally means ‘plunder’ or ‘seize’).”¹⁸

It’s hard to imagine how violent men could plunder or seize the Kingdom, but be that as it may, some might say that the use of ‘force’ is more like ‘inner resolve’ or ‘determination’ to *enter* the Kingdom. Determination is a good thing, but it really doesn’t have anything to do with what Yeshua meant. Robert Mounce offers some further insight into the Greek words, saying:

“The interpretation of verse 12 has been discussed at length. One’s approach turns on whether, (#1 above) *biazetai*,”

1. “is **passive** (‘has suffered violence’),
2. or **middle** (‘has been coming violently’).”

“Because the noun (#2 above) *biastai* (forceful men) that occurs in the parallel clause is used in a negative sense (the cognate verb *biao* means ‘to defraud, cheat, or overpower’), it is better to take (#1 above) *biazetai* as **passive** and translate ‘has been enduring violent assault’ (Weymouth).”

¹² Brown, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament*, p. 39.

¹³ βιάζω Joseph Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, paragraph 2167 (Accordance Bible Software). “Matt. 11:12...the kingdom of heaven is taken by violence, carried by storm, i.e. a share in the heavenly kingdom is sought for with the most ardent zeal and the intensest exertion...The other explanation is, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence namely, from its enemies.

¹⁴ Brown, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament*, p. 39.

¹⁵ βιαστής Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, paragraph 2171.

¹⁶ Brown, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament*, p. 39.

¹⁷ ἀρπάξω Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, paragraph 1779. “to seize and carry off speedily, John 6:15; Acts 23:10; used of divine power transferring a person marvelously and swiftly from one place to another, to snatch or catch away...2 Cor. 12:4...1 Thess. 4:17.”

¹⁸ France, *Matthew*, p. 195. ‘ἀρπάξουσιν *harpazusin* is the word that is translated ‘seize’ in the NA Interlinear; *harpaz* is the verb; to snatch away.

“Jesus is saying that ever since the days of John the Baptist *the kingdom of heaven has been under assault by violent men who are trying to overcome it by force*. These men are sometimes identified as Zealots who want to force the kingdom’s arrival. More likely they are like Herod, who imprisoned John, and the Jewish antagonists of the gospel.”¹⁹

One might agree with this scholarly interpretation, for lack of a viable alternative, but within the scholastic community there are critics of this understanding. The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* states,

‘In view of Mk. 10:17ff.; Mt. 5:3ff.; 7:21, and also the present chapter (vv. 27-29), it is *hardly conceivable* that He should have spoken of men deliberately and *successfully* seeking to wrest the kingdom to themselves.’²⁰

Good point! The *Theological Dictionary* goes on to state, concerning the Zealot theory, that,

“The difficulty here is that Mt. is concerned with the prophets, the Law, the Baptist, Jesus and the βασιλεια’ (*basiliah*: Kingdom). *It is thus hard to see the point of a special reference to an irrelevant subject* when we naturally expect an *important insight* on the situation depicted.”²¹

Great point! We expect an ‘important insight’ from Yeshua concerning the Kingdom of Heaven, not something ‘irrelevant’ from Yeshua about the Kingdom’s alleged sad situation. It’s good to know that there are others who question what theologians present. Once the Greek is translated back into Hebrew we’ll see a ‘very special reference’ and an incredible insight that v. 12 speaks of that points directly to an ancient biblical text from the prophet Micah (circa 720 BC). This will reveal what Yeshua meant that day.

David Stern adds some spice to the Greek/Western understanding by stating that not only was it a physical assault on the Kingdom, but a spiritual one as well. *Demons* were attacking the Kingdom through their human hosts and trying to stop Jesus from being crucified. This theory, though, with no pertinent Scripture to support it, only supersaturates an already bloated interpretation. Stern writes,

“The Greek is difficult. As rendered, it means that violent ones (demons and their human vehicles) are trying to keep God from carrying out his plan through Yeshua, e.g., through Herod having put Yochanan (John) in prison (v. 2). An alternative understanding, ‘the Kingdom of Heaven has been advancing forcefully; and forceful people are seizing hold of it,’ seems inconsistent with vv. 25-30.”²²

The *Wycliffe Bible Commentary* joins the chorus and states,

‘The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence. The verb (#1 above, p. 4) may be regarded either as middle—*violently forces its way* (cf. Lk. 16:16), or as passive—*is violently treated*. *The latter is more consistent with the next clause*. From John’s initial announcement of the coming of the Kingdom, *the response had been a violent one*, whether by vicious opponents (cf. vv. 18, 19; 14:3, 4) or by enthusiastic supporters. The violent take it by force (or, seize it). Compare Lk. 16:16.’²³

¹⁹ Robert H. Mounce, W. Ward Gasque, New Testament Editor, *New International Biblical Commentary: Matthew* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), p. 104.

²⁰ Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, Editors, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Translator and Editor, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), p. 610.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 611.

²² David Stern, *Jewish New Covenant Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Covenant Publications, 1992), p. 43.

²³ Charles F. Pfeiffer, Old Testament, Everett F. Harrison, New Testament, *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*

Alfred Edersheim speaks in the same vein, but unwittingly reveals the key to the answer (which I've *italicized*):

“When we remember that in ‘the Sermon on the Mount’ the call was only to ‘enter in,’ we feel that we have now reached a period when the access to ‘the narrow door’ was obstructed by the enmity of so many, and when it needed ‘violence’ *to break through*, and ‘take the Kingdom...by force (Mt. 11:12). This personal *breaking through* the opposing multitude, in order to enter in through the narrow door, was in opposition to the many—the Pharisees and Jews generally—who were seeking to enter in, in their own way, never doubting success, but who would discover their terrible mistake.”²⁴

‘From the time that John began to preach the Kingdom, hindrances of every kind had been raised. To overcome them and enter the Kingdom, it required, as it were, violence like that to enter a city which was surrounded by a hostile army.’²⁵

Edersheim presents the Kingdom as a kind of an American football game with an ‘end zone’ where one needs to make a ‘touchdown,’ running into and past all the opposing players standing in the way of the entry into the Kingdom.

These ‘violent’ interpretations have been preached to countless thousands of people, and I’m sure that some of them were motivated to ‘gird up their loins’ and push forward, or to think that the Kingdom was under attack. Of interest to us, though, is Edersheim’s use of the term ‘*breaking through*.’ It has nothing to do with the meaning he attaches to it, but it does speak to what Yeshua said. More on this in a moment. Edersheim goes on to object to the scholarly interpretations, saying, ‘The common interpretations of this verse have seemed to me singularly unsatisfactory.’²⁶ He grimaced, too.

That there are ‘hindrances of every kind,’ to all those who would seek to enter the Kingdom, is certainly a reality, but this isn’t what Yeshua meant. The Nestle-Aland Greek-English *Interlinear* reads,

‘And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of the Heavens is forcibly entered (#1 above) and violent men (#2) seize it (#3).’²⁷

The word for ‘forcibly entered’ is βιάζονται (#1) and means, ‘to urge, constrain, overpower by force; to press earnestly forward, to rush, Luke 16:16.’²⁸ Another Greek lexicon states that the word occurs ‘always with a component of force...in a good sense, press (in), try hard to (enter).’²⁹ Yet another lexicon reveals that inherit within the Greek word is the meaning, to ‘apply force...use force, enter forcibly into something.’³⁰ As we’ll see, the use of force to go past, or rather through something, is what the Hebrew word speaks of; a ‘breaking through,’ as Edersheim wrote of.

(Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), p. 948.

²⁴ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), p. 682.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 460.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, note 31.

²⁷ The Greek for both words in Nestle-Aland is identical to the Textus Receptus.

²⁸ Wesley J. Perschbacher, Editor, *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publications, 1990), p. 70.

²⁹ Timothy Friberg and Barbara Friberg, Editors, with Neva Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), p. 91.

³⁰ Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 140.

The word for ‘violent men’ is βίασται (#2, p. 4) and means, ‘one who uses violence, or is impetuous, one who is *forceful in eager pursuit*.’³¹ The last phrase is where it doesn’t have a negative sense, but a good sense. The meaning of force is present in the Hebrew word, in a pictorial sense of sheep *breaking through* a fence in order to get to the other side where the shepherd is.

The Hebraic Perspective

When the Greek text is translated back into what Yeshua said in Hebrew, it’s easy to see what the Lord was speaking of. The Hebrew word for ‘is forcibly entered’ (the Greek βιάζεται #1) is *poretzet* פּוֹרֶצֶת³² and comes from the Hebrew verb *paratz* פָּרַץ.³³ The primary meaning of the verb *paratz* is,

*‘to break or tear down...e.g. a wall...to break asunder, to break forth, as a child from the womb, Gen. 38:29; of water, to burst forth...a torrent bursts forth...also to break out, act with violence, Hos. 4:2.’*³⁴

The son born to Judah and Tamar, of whom the Messiah would come through,³⁵ was Perez (*Peretz* in Hebrew; פֶּרֶץ from our verb *paratz*). The name means ‘one who breaks out’ or ‘breaks through’ or ‘one who breaks open’ or one who makes an opening (in something like a wall or a fence). *Peretz* is actually one of the biblically based rabbinic titles of the Messiah. He’s called the ‘Son of *Peretz*,’ the One who breaks through (something)—‘The Breacher’ or ‘The Breach Maker.’³⁶ The noun *peretz* also conveys the same meaning as the verb:

*‘a breach of a wall...a breaking forth, Gen. 38:29; of water, a bursting forth...overthrow, calamity.’*³⁷ A breach, ‘made at the moment of birth; Gn. 38:29’³⁸ (the birth of Peretz).

Here is the concept of violence or natural force in the *breaching* of a wall (e.g. in a war or by a torrent of rushing water). The Hebrew verb and noun carry the connotation of force or violence, but primarily of ‘force’ or ‘action’ in the sense of tearing down or *breaking through* something.

³¹ Perschbacher, *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*, p. 70.

³² *The Torah, Prophets, Writings and The New Covenant* (Jerusalem: The Bible Society of Israel, 1991), p. 14 in the New Covenant.

³³ Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p. 634.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Gen. 38:29; Ruth 4:18-22; Mt. 1:3; Lk. 3:33.

³⁶ Sanford R. Howard, *L’Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom* (Thorsby, AL: Sabbath House, Inc., 1999), pp. 162-163. In *Midrash Rabbah*, chap. 12, § 6, vol. 1, p. 92 of the 1960 Soncino edition, it has this in reference to Gen. 3:15: “Rabbi Berekiah said in the name of Rabbi Samuel and B. Nachman: ‘Though these things were created in their fullness yet when Adam sinned they were spoiled, and they will not return to their perfection until the Son of Peretz (Messiah) comes.’ According to Gen. 38:29, Ruth 4:18, and 1st Chron 2:4-5, Peretz was the first of the hereditary heirs of Judah, the son of Jacob. Thus here was a progenitor of King David and of the more illustrious King Messiah.” Judah is acknowledged by Scripture and the Rabbis as the one through whom King Messiah would come from. “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be (Gen. 49:10).” The Rabbis state this in *Midrash Rabbah* on Genesis, chap. 97, NV, volume 2, p. 906, that, “The scepter (staff) shall not depart from Judah alludes to the Messiah, Son of David” (p. 203).

³⁷ Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 634.

³⁸ פֶּרֶץ Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), p. 973.

The next Hebrew word is a noun from the second Greek word (#2) and means, ‘violent men,’ but in Hebrew it’s פּוֹרְצִים (*port’zim*, again from *paratz*) and it’s just the plural of *Peretz*, *the one who tears down*. These are *breakers* or *breachers* of a wall or a fence, etc.

The third Hebrew word for the third Greek word, to ‘seize it’ (#3) is אוֹחֲזִים (*ohah’zim*) and means ‘to seize...to take, catch, in hunting, *to take or have possession*.’³⁹ The verb means ‘to take possession (of the land’ e.g. Israel possessing Canaan; Josh. 22:9), and also speaks of an ‘eternal possession’ (Gen. 17:8; 48:4; Lev. 25:34).⁴⁰ This speaks of *possessing* the Kingdom of Heaven in terms of inheritance versus forcibly seizing it or wanting to take it by force. With these three Hebrew words we can now translate Matthew 11:12 as our Lord spoke it:

‘And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of the Heavens is *being breached* (having been breached by the Breach Maker, Yeshua) and *the breakers* (His Followers) are *possessing it*.’

With this understanding the prophetic passage in Micah appears. It speaks of the Messiah as a shepherd who *breaches* or *tears open* a section of the sheepfold *fence* or *wall*. He goes through the opening and once on the other side, calls his sheep by name and they begin to go through the opening he made. As they do, it enlarges as more and more sheep *press through* the opening, shoulder to shoulder.

Yeshua was speaking of Himself as the Shepherd Breach Maker who would make a way for His Sheep to follow Him into the very presence of God the Father—the Kingdom of the Heavens. With the Lord’s death, resurrection and ascension He made a way in *the Fence of Heaven called the firmament* or expanse that separates the physical universe from the presence and dwelling place of the Father (Gen. 1:6-8).

One day Yeshua will call to His Flock, those who are Born Again and they will enter into the fully manifested Kingdom of Heaven (the New Jerusalem) through the opening that He made in the firmament for them in His Ascension. The Sheep (believers; breakers) will *break down* and *break through* the breached Fence opening as they answer the call of their Shepherd and enter into His eternal Kingdom.

The Prophecy of Messiah—The Breach Maker

In Matthew 11:12 Yeshua alludes to the Messianic prophecy in Micah 2:12-13, which speaks of the Messiah, the Shepherd-King, as the Breach Maker making a way for His sheep to go through the fence to green pastures. The passage has God speaking and saying to Israel, as the northern Kingdom is about to fall and be annihilated by the Assyrians:

‘I will surely assemble *all of you, Jacob!* I will surely gather the Remnant of Israel! I will put them together like sheep in *Botzrah* (English: Bozrah—the capital of Edom,⁴¹ known for its vast flocks of sheep); like a flock in the midst of its pasture. They shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.’ (Micah 2:12)

‘**The Breach Maker** (the name of the Messiah; *Poraytz* פּוֹרֵץ from the verb, ‘to tear

³⁹ Ibid., p. 17.

⁴⁰ Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, Authors, Mark E. Biddle, Translator, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), p. 82.

⁴¹ Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), p. 149. The ‘capital of Edom.’ It can also mean a sheepfold. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, editor, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, Abridged (Accordance Bible Software), paragraph 3041.

down,' to breach, to break through) *goes up before them. They break out*, pass through the *Gate* and go out by it.⁴² So their King (Yeshua) *goes on before them* and Yahveh (Messiah Yeshua; Yahveh the Son) is *at their head*.⁴³ (Micah 2:13; the last sentence saying the same thing about Messiah Yeshua, in two different ways, which is a common Hebrew way of writing)

This text is what Yeshua alluded to that day in Matthew 11:12. He was declaring that He was the (Good) Shepherd, the Breach Breaker, who would make a breach in the heavenly Fence (the firmament of Heaven that kept men from God's presence), so His Sheep (the breachers) could follow Him into their *eternal inheritance*, the heavenly realm, called the New Jerusalem (Rev. 3:12; 21:2; cf. Gal. 4:26). A literal translation of Micah 2:13 reads,

'And the *One breaking open* will go up before them and *they will break open* and *they will go through the Gate* and they will go out through *Him*, and their King (i.e. Yeshua) will pass through before them (with) Yahveh (i.e. Yahveh the Son) at their head.'⁴⁴

The Kingdom wasn't *suffering violence*, but on the contrary, the Shepherd, by His death, resurrection and ascension, tore open a hole and breached the heavenly Fence that separated Israel from her God. Another conceptual hint of this is what Matthew writes of when the Veil was torn at Messiah's death:

"Then, behold! The Veil of the Temple was *torn in two from top to bottom*, and the Earth quaked and the rocks were split." (Matthew 27:51)

The Veil of the Temple was the inner Veil that separated the Holy of Holies (where God the Father dwelt on Earth) from the Holy Place. This Veil was a picture of the firmament of Heaven that kept everyone out of the presence of God—God's dwelling place. The author of Hebrews also speaks of this Veil *as Yeshua's flesh* and says that *a Way has been made into the presence of God* (the Father) because that Veil—Yeshua's flesh, was ripped open or torn apart, or breached at His crucifixion:

"Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the *Holy of Holies* by the Blood of Yeshua, by a *new and living way* which He consecrated for us, *through the Veil, that is, His flesh*." (Hebrews 10:19-20)

This Veil is also pictured in Yeshua as the Gate through which the sheep enter the Kingdom. In John 10:1, 7, 9, Yeshua speaks of Himself as the Gate (Door in English, of a sheepfold, but sheepfolds do not have doors):

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the Gate into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber...I am the Gate of the sheep...I am the Gate. If anyone enters *through Me*, he shall be *saved*, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:1, 7, 9)

The sheep going in and out speak of temporal life in this universe where believers find themselves coming and going out of the presence of God. After Judgment Day, when the Kingdom fully manifests, believers won't be going out.

Obviously, when Matthew was translated into Greek by Christian scribes, 'there was something lost in the

⁴² The Hebrew word that is translated into English as 'it' is 'bo' בּוֹ. It's a preposition (by) with a third person singular suffix (him). The phrase should read, 'pass through the Gate (for Yeshua is also the Gate), and go out by *Him*.'

⁴³ The Three are all Yahveh, as though Yahveh was Their last name: Father Yahveh, Holy Spirit Yahveh, and Yeshua Yahveh. For more on this see [Yeshua—God the Son](#)

⁴⁴ John Kohlenberger the 3rd, Editor, *The NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Corporation, 1979), p. 533.

translation.’ The commentaries say the Kingdom of Heaven ‘suffers violence,’ or is taken by violence. The idea of force is inherent in the Hebrew words, but the Greek lacks the true understanding that can only be gotten by translating it back into Hebrew; what Matthew was originally written in. This, then, opens up the link in the Scripture chain to Micah that accurately presents what Yeshua *meant*. Micah then becomes a stepping stone in the Scripture chain that reveals both the eternal salvation of the Father, and the Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Yeshua, the King of Glory, as Psalm 24 declares, but first, The Shepherd.

The Shepherd

In ancient Israel the shepherd would take his sheep and put them into a place for the night that would be safe from bear, wolf and lion. If possible, a small box canyon was ideal. The canyon walls afforded protection on three sides with its high cliffs, and the shepherd could build a fence of rocks and branches across the opening so that no wild animal could easily come in, and no sheep could wander off. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* states that the sheepfold or fold was ‘a wall or hedge made of stones, which might be used for a defense of a fold,’⁴⁵ and that,

‘Sheepfolds were of various types. At times they were located in or near a cave (e.g., 1st Sam. 24:3). Some were permanent enclosures with a roof and stone walls,⁴⁶ while others were temporary, consisting simply of an open pen with thornbush sides.’⁴⁷

When daybreak came the shepherd would make a small *opening* in the fence for himself. This passageway was known as a ‘door’ or a ‘gate.’⁴⁸ Once on the other side the shepherd would *call to his sheep by name* and they would begin to *break through* to the other side.

Messiah Yeshua is the Good Shepherd—the Breach Maker. His Sheep *hear His Voice* and follow Him out of the sheepfold:

‘the sheep hear His Voice: and *He calls His own sheep by name*, and *leads them out*. When He puts forth all His own, *He goes ahead of them*, and the sheep follow Him because they know His Voice.’ (John 10:3-4)

The Shepherd ‘going ahead of them’ parallels Micah’s Shepherd as ‘He goes ahead of them’ and the sheep follow Him because they hear His voice calling to them by name (cf. John 10:1-3f.). Yeshua was saying that He would lead Israel out of this world of darkness into His Kingdom.

ISBE says that the shepherd spent much of his day, ‘talking to his sheep until they all recognized his voice.’⁴⁹ *The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* states:

‘So close is the connection between shepherd and sheep that to this day Middle Eastern shepherds can divide flocks that have mingled at a well or during the night simply by

⁴⁵ Geoffrey W. Bromiley, General Editor, Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, Associate Editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. Two (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 326.

⁴⁶ I imagine that this type of sheepfold would have a door on it, but I don’t think Micah’s did, which was what Yeshua was alluding to in Mt. 11:12 (but it might be a door in John 10:2-3).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 464.

⁴⁸ William Wilson, *Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, no publishing date is given), p. 182. The word for *gate* has as one of its synonyms, the word *door*. The Hebrew word *petach* is also used, which means an *opening*, which is what a gate or a door is.

⁴⁹ Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. Four, p. 464.

calling their sheep, who follow their shepherd's voice.⁵⁰

In Hebrew the word for gate, door and opening are conceptually interchangeable. The concept is of an opening or hole in something (a wall, a fence, etc.). The Hebrew word for gate is *sha'are* שַׁעַר and means 'to cleave, divide...an aperture...a gate.'⁵¹ It also means,

to "break, break off, through...gap, opening...tear in two, dissolve...split, divide, tear down...gate."⁵² "The root idea is 'to split open' and 'to break through.'"⁵³

Yeshua—The Breach Maker

Yeshua is both the Breacher of the Fence *and* also the Fence, Gate or Door through which the Sheep pass through. The Sheep (also breachers) go *through* the Gate (John 10:9). Leland Ryken states that, 'Jesus used the imagery of a gate for entrance either into life or into destruction (Mt. 7:13-14).'⁵⁴ He writes,

"Jesus elaborates the image of the gate ('door' in some older translations), in his Good Shepherd Discourse (Jn. 10:1-17). The good shepherd 'enters by the gate' and leads his sheep out through the gate of the sheepfold, an image of safety. In an extension of the metaphor, Jesus calls himself the gate: 'I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved' (Jn. 10:9 NRSV).⁵⁵ In the context this certainly refers to being a door for the sheep and hence the gate or entry-way to salvation."⁵⁶

C. F. Keil sees the passage in Micah 2:12-13 as speaking of God's future Redemption-Salvation through Messiah, the Second Moses, following the great redemption prototype from Egypt through Moses:

'And the Lord will gather together all Jacob, not merely a portion, and yet only the remnant of Israel...the further description rests upon the fact of the leading of Israel out of Egypt, *which is to be renewed in all that is essential at a future time*. The following clauses also predict the miraculous multiplication of the remnant of Israel (see Hos. 2:1, 2; Jer. 31:10) as experienced by the people in the olden time under the oppression of Egypt (Ex. 1:12). The comparison to the flock of Bozrah presupposes that Bozrah's wealth in flocks was well known...The comparison which follows, 'like a flock in the midst of its pasture'...refers to the multiplication, and to the noise made by a *densely packed and numerous flock*. The same tumult will be made by the assembled Israelites on account of the multitude of men.'⁵⁷

'In v. 13 the redemption of Israel out of exile is depicted under the figure of liberation

⁵⁰ Leland Ryken, James Wilhoit and Tremper Longman the 3rd, General Editors, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1998), p. 782.

⁵¹ Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 733.

⁵² Dr. Francis Brown, Dr. S. R. Driver, Dr. Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Professor Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, Translator and E. Rodiger, Editor, *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Lafayette, IN: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1978), p. 1044.

⁵³ Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, p. 945.

⁵⁴ Ryken, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 322.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 216.

⁵⁷ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary On The Old Testament, vol. 10, Minor Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001; originally published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1866-91), p. 303.

from captivity. Egypt was a slave-house (ch. 6:4; cf. Ex. 20:2); *so is exile a prison* with walls and gates, which must be broken through. **פָּרַץ**, *Ha'Poraytz*, the Breaker-through who goes before them, is not Jehovah, *but as the counterpart of Moses*, the leader of Israel out of Egypt, the captain appointed by God for His people, answering to the head, which they are said to choose for themselves in Hos. 2:2, *a second Moses*...in the highest sense, Christ, who opens the prison-doors and *redeems the captives of Zion*...Led by him, they *break through* the walls, and march through the *gate*, and go out through it out of that prison...Their King...goes before them at their head...Just as Jehovah went before Israel as the angel of the Lord⁵⁸ in the pillar of cloud and fire at the exodus from Egypt (Ex. 13:21), so at the future redemption of the people of God will Jehovah go before them as King, and lead the procession (see Isaiah 52:12; cf. Rom 11:25f.).⁵⁹

Even though Keil failed to realize the connection of Micah 2:13 to Matthew 11:12, he did see the imagery of the gate or walls being broken through by the 'Breaker;' the Messiah, the Second Moses, delivering or redeeming Israel to future glory.

This brings us to yet another picture of Yeshua breaching the heavenly firmament in the picture of Moses. When Israel had her back up against the Red Sea, and certain death awaited them in the swords and arrows of Pharaoh's army, Moses *breached or cleaved the Sea apart* by the power behind the Shepherd's Staff or Branch in his hand, which branch pictured Yeshua,⁶⁰ and Israel walked through the midst of the 'cleaved' Sea on *dry ground*. Both this and Yeshua's breach were impossible in the natural, and both speak of God's graciousness to Israel over her enemies; Pharaoh (slavery) and Satan (sin and death), who is the Prince of the Prison of Darkness, where Israel now dwells. All who are born live in his prison and Satan seeks to keep Israel from her God, freedom and life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The passage in Micah relates to the End of Time ('I will surely assemble *all* of you, Jacob'), which symbolically began with Yeshua in the days of John the Baptist. Symbolically, because entry into the Kingdom on Earth didn't officially begin until Acts Two, when Yeshua's sacrificial blood could be applied to a person so he could be Born Again and filled with the Holy Spirit, and in a sense, become an island of the Kingdom of God on Earth.

Cleansed so that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit could dwell in a vessel of clay and begin to transform the person into the Image of Messiah Yeshua. When John the Baptist and Yeshua spoke of the Kingdom, the breach had not yet been made in the Heavens, which breach was made by His death and resurrection, but one day all Israel (both Jew and Gentile) shall go through that firmament who is Yeshua and live forever in the presence of the God of Israel.

The breaching of the firmament, which separates the upper Waters from the lower Waters is what Yeshua spoke of that day in Mt. 11:12. The Kingdom of Heaven would be breached by Him (the Shepherd Breach Breaker) and all His sheep, the breachers, would pass through from this universe to God's very presence and come to inherit this Land that is symbolized in Joshua taking Israel over the Jordan, a reenactment of Moses taking Israel through the Red Sea, walking on dry land, but this time into the Promised Land, not the Wilderness, which symbolizes this world or universe of Darkness where Christians are tested.

Until then, Christians are of this world, but not part of it. They have entered into the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth and they are breaching the Fence, making the breach wider for themselves and others following after them.

⁵⁸ The 'Angel' of the Lord was not an angel, but Yeshua. See [The Angel of the Lord](#).

⁵⁹ Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary On The Old Testament, vol. 10, Minor Prophets*, p. 303.

⁶⁰ For an understanding of this branch as Yeshua see [The Branch](#).

The Ancient Gates Are Opened

The ancient Gates are written of in Psalm 24, where it speaks of the Gates opening for the King of Glory to enter into the heavenly realm, the very Presence of the Father:

‘Lift up your heads, oh *Gates* and be lifted up, oh ancient *Doors*, that the King of Glory may come in! Who is the King of Glory? Yahveh⁶¹ (i.e. Yeshua, God the Son, who is Yahveh the Son), strong and mighty. Yahveh mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, oh *Gates*, and lift them up, oh ancient *Doors*, that the King of Glory may come in! Who is this King of Glory? Yahveh (Yeshua), King of the heavenly Armies—He is the King of Glory! *Selah.*’ (Psalm 24:7-10)

Some think that the gates and doors were those of the Temple in Jerusalem. There are three problems with this. First, it speaks of *ancient* gates and doors. At the time when David wrote Psalm 24, *if the Temple was even in existence*, the doors could hardly have been called ancient.

Second, that of assuming that the gates and doors speak of the *Temple in Jerusalem*. The Temple isn’t mentioned in the Psalm. If King David wrote this, and it’s most likely that he did, as the beginning of the Psalm records it as a Psalm of David, the Temple hadn’t been built yet. Therefore, it wouldn’t be possible for the ancient gates and doors of the Psalm to be referring to an earthly Temple that didn’t exist yet. The Temple wouldn’t be built until after David’s active reign, and most likely, his death, as Solomon’s inaugural prayer doesn’t seem to speak of his father being alive (1st Kings 8:14-26). His son, King Solomon, would begin to build the earthly Temple in the fourth year of his reign, but it wouldn’t be finished until the eleventh year.⁶² So, even if David had lived until the Temple was dedicated, and he had written the psalm on his death bed, the gates of the Temple would not have been seen as ancient.

Third, even though Keil writes that the doors are those of the (earthly) Temple, he also states that these are the Doors of Eternity⁶³ because the Hebrew speaks of it as such (Ps. 24:7; פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם *pit'hay olam*). In Keil’s understanding the Father was entering the Temple in Jerusalem. In fact, though, the Psalm depicts Yeshua coming to the Gates of Heaven, the firmament that separated Israel from the Father, *a firmament that no mere man could penetrate nor go through*, but Yeshua, because of His death, resurrection and upon His first ascension, is now ‘seen’ by David rising and *the ancient, eternal Gates and Doors*⁶⁴ (*of the Firmament*) **must give way to Him** and let Him back into His heavenly abode because He is the *sinless King of Glory*. Death could not hold him because Death only has authority over those who sin. His Resurrection confirms His sinlessness and in His ascension to the Father the eternal Doors or Gates opened (another way of saying they were breached). *They would open for no one else.*

If Yeshua had sinned He wouldn’t have been resurrected nor would He have been able to return to the holy dwelling place of His Father. On Judgment Day He would have lived in Hell forever, with us. That’s what was at stake in the three temptations of Messiah (Mt. 4:1f.) and also, the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt.

⁶¹ The name Yahveh is like the heavenly ‘last name’ of the three Persons in the God Family are Yahveh. There Father Yahveh, Holy Spirit Yahveh, and Yeshua Yahveh. It’s Yahveh the Son that the Psalm is speaking of, for the Father never left the heavenly realm to have to return via the Gates of Heaven. Read how Yeshua is the only begotten Son of God (the Father) in, [Yeshua—God the Son](#).

⁶² See 1st Kings 1:1–2:12; 5:5; 6:1, 37-38. Solomon didn’t finish building the Temple until almost 12 years after he began to reign. Scripture says it was in the 8th month of the 11th year that the Temple was finished (1st Kgs. 6:37-38). Note also that 1st Kgs. 3:6, 14 speaks of David in the past tense. David was most likely dead before the Temple was begun, let alone finished.

⁶³ Keil, *Commentary On The Old Testament, vol. 10, Minor Prophets*, p. 213.

⁶⁴ The terms *gates* and *doors* are synonymous.

26:36f.).

With the Gates being opened to let the King of Glory in, the King brings His Flock with Him, which another Psalm speaks of as having been held captive. This is the prison that refers to Man's fallen condition in this world of darkness:

“You have ascended on High! You have led *captivity captive!* You have received gifts among men, even from the rebellious, that Yahveh God might dwell there.” (Ps. 68:18)

Of course, Paul quotes this very verse in relating to what Yeshua did upon His death, resurrection and ascension (Eph. 4:8). The picture is multi-faceted.

In the beginning of Psalm 24 it speaks of the Earth being established upon the *Waters*. This further links the ‘heavenly breach’ to the firmament of Creation. The preceding six verses of the Psalm read:

‘The Earth is Yahveh’s and all it contains, The world and those who dwell in it. For He has *founded it* upon the *seas* and *established it* upon the *rivers*. Who may ascend into the Mountain of Yahveh? And who may *stand in His holy place*? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood and has not sworn deceitfully. He shall receive a blessing from Yahveh and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your Face, even Jacob, *selah.*’ (Psalm 24:1-6)

The seas and the rivers are a reference back to the first chapter of Genesis where the physical Heavens and the Earth were created in the *lower Waters*, below the firmament of Genesis 1:6-8. Yahveh would dwell in the upper Waters and be associated with those Waters⁶⁵ (as say, Yeshua is associated with, and is, the Light; Jn. 8:12). A firmament (or expanse; NIV) separated the two universes.

The Hebrew for *seas* in Psalm 24 is מַיִם (*my'yim*) and should be translated as waters.⁶⁶ The word for rivers is נְהַרֹתַי (*niharotai*). It can mean, ‘current, stream...river.’⁶⁷ The sentence is basically saying the same thing over again, but in a slightly different way to emphasize it, substituting rivers for waters. Saying the same thing in Hebrew, but in a different way, is called parallelism. ‘Waters’ and ‘rivers’ parallel one another (as *founded* and *established* also parallel each other and say the same thing). That the verse in question refers to Creation is evident from vv. 1-2, where the Heavens and the Earth are Yahveh’s; He having established them upon the Waters:⁶⁸

“Then God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the *Waters* and let it separate the *waters* from the *Waters.*’ God made the expanse, and separated the *waters* which were below the expanse from the *Waters* which were above the expanse; and it was so. God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.”

“Then God said, ‘Let the *waters* below the Heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear’ and it was so. God called the dry land Earth and the gathering of the *waters* He called seas; and God saw that it was good.” (Genesis 1:6-10)

All the words for ‘waters’ and ‘seas’ are מַיִם (*my'im*), the same word found for ‘seas’ in the Creation account of Psalm 24:2. The firmament separated Man, specifically Israel, from God because only Israel has been redeemed; all Gentiles believing in Messiah Yeshua are part of Israel (Jn. 10:16; Rom. 11:11f.; Gal. 6:16; Eph. 2:11f.).⁶⁹ The Firmament that separated the physical realm from the spiritual realm has been breached by the only One who could do it—the Son of Peretz: Yeshua the Breach Breaker!

⁶⁵ See Gen. 1:2-10; Psalm 104:3; 148:4; Is. 8:6; 55:1; Jer. 51:16; Ezk. 1:24-26f; 2nd Peter 3:5; Rev. 22:1, 17.

⁶⁶ Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 483.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 538.

⁶⁸ Keil, *Commentary On The Old Testament, vol. 5, Psalms*, p. 211.

Conclusion

How can anyone come into the very Presence of God Almighty when there is no way, humanly speaking, of actually getting there? It's to this reality that Yeshua speaks of in Matthew 11:12. This is certainly not an 'irrelevant subject,' as the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* correctly labeled the teachings of the Christian commentaries on the verse, but truly, an 'important insight' from our Lord that the *Dictionary* and many others are looking for.

Yeshua spoke of the Universe of Eternity—how God was going to make a way for Israel to enter the Kingdom of Heaven where the Father dwells—that place that is not of this universe, and live there forever. Messiah wasn't talking about the Kingdom suffering violence or the violent taking it by force. He wasn't speaking of the Zealots forcefully wanting to make Him King nor of Herod's henchmen violently wanting to stop the King from being crucified or of somehow impeding the unfolding of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

Yeshua spoke of His sheep in *this* creation, this world of darkness, enclosed and imprisoned in the satanic sheepfold of this universe, and of Him as the Shepherd-King who would breach the fence that kept them enclosed in this world of sin and death. The fence, also known as the heavenly Door or Gate, also symbolizes Yeshua, who was torn asunder by the crucifixion—a Living Way made in the firmament by the One in whom this universe exists.⁷⁰

This happens in two stages, the first being when a person is Born Again, for they are translated or immediately brought into His Kingdom while still on Earth, and he is in this world, but not of this world (Col. 1:13). The second stage will be on Judgment Day when welcomes Christians into the Kingdom that His Father prepared for them since before Creation (Mt. 25:34).

At His ascension Yeshua went before His Flock, *breaking through the Fence, Gate, Firmament*, and on The Other Side He calls to those who are His. His Sheep hear His voice (Jn. 10:1-4f.) and proceed, as sheep do, through the opening made by the Shepherd, to be on the side where He is. As Paul says, we are (already) seated in heavenly places with Him (Eph. 2:6), but we also await its full manifestation; oneness with the Father by being made into the very Image of Yeshua, and living forever in Their very Presence.⁷¹

This breach, made by the Messiah, the Breach Breaker-Maker, was made so that there wouldn't a separation between God and Israel, for even before the Fall, Adam and Eve did not live where God lived. In other words, we aren't returning to Paradise, but to a place we never were. Yeshua has truly made a way for us where no way existed. In this He is the Second Moses, leading His people out of slavery and darkness and into His marvelous Light, Freedom and Love. As for those who would seek to enter who are not Born Again, a similar fate awaits them that awaited Pharaoh's Army when they followed Moses and the Sons of Israel into the Red Sea. This is called Judgment Day.

Translating the Greek of Matthew 11:12 into Hebrew is the basis for properly understanding what Yeshua said about the Kingdom and paved the way for what He was alluding to, which was Micah 2:12-13 speaking about the Shepherd-Breach Maker.⁷²

⁶⁹ See also Rev. 3:12; 7:15; 11:1, 19; 14:15; 15:5, 8; 21:2, 10, 22.

⁷⁰ John 1:3, 10; Acts 17:28; Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16.

⁷¹ See [Salvation—The Promise!](#) for what awaits us on The Other Side.

⁷² I am indebted to David Bivin for his presentation of the link between Micah 2:13 and Mt. 11:12. Many years ago I read his book, *Understanding The Difficult Words of Jesus* (Austin, TX: Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, 1984) in which he presented the connection. In his revised edition (2001, pp. 84-87) he states that John the Baptist was the Breaker or Poretz and that Jesus was the King that came through the opening that John made. This he understood from a rabbinic teaching on Micah 2:13, which he himself states actually went *against* what the

The Greek translations and commentaries weren't able to present this because they failed to understand Mt. 11:12 from its Hebraic perspective, and so they were never able to see what Yeshua said nor the divine Scripture links to Micah 2:12-13, Psalm 24:7-10 and Gen. 1:1f. They are still deeply engrossed in trying to figure out if the Greek word for violence is passive, that the Kingdom suffered violence, or middle, that violence was done to the Kingdom, and just who those violent people are.

The only thing Greek about the New Testament are its words, but the ideas, concepts and the Reality it seeks to present are Hebraic. The God of Israel revealed Himself to Abraham and Moses, not Socrates and Aristotle.

Israel is God's Chosen, forever.⁷³ A people's collective experience is reflected in their psyche, and it's the basis for their language. Israel is the only *nation* that God manifested Himself to, led out of slavery, literally spoke to (e.g. Mt. Sinai and the Prophets), performed *incredible* miracles for, and gave His will to, which is seen in His words being written down, which is called Scripture. Therefore, the Scriptures, both Old and New, reflect *this* divine reality.

The Hebraic Perspective is the way to biblically interpret and understand the Scriptures, taking nothing away from the Greek-Western mindset of Christian theologians, and The Hebraic Perspective cries out to all Christians to walk out their faith in Messiah Yeshua through all the laws, statutes, ordinances, testimonies, judgments and rules of Moses (i.e. Mosaic Law) that applies to them (cf. 1st John 2:6; Hebrews 13:8; Col. 1:18). Yeshua kept all the rules of Moses that applied to Him, and so, shouldn't we, too?⁷⁴ The

Scripture seemed to be saying. The rabbinic interpretation must be rejected in lieu of the obvious scriptural one. This is seen from the fact that verse 13 is in Hebraic parallelism, stating the same thing twice, but in different ways. The first part of v. 13 has the Breach Maker going out of the sheep-fold *before* the sheep. The second part has the King passing *before* them, which is the same person, Messiah Yeshua. Also, we know that 'Poretz' or Breach Maker is an ancient name for King Messiah and that no one entered the Kingdom of Yeshua until *after* His death and resurrection. Yeshua Himself says that the Torah and the Prophets were proclaimed until John, but that with John, the *Kingdom* was *now* being *proclaimed* and many were seeking to be part of it.

John's role was not to make the opening in the heavenly fence, but to point the Jewish people to the One who would. As such, John came in the Spirit of Elijah to *prepare* the way for the King of Israel, not to make the Way, or to make the breach in the heavenly barrier. John was the messenger sent to prepare the Way before, and for, Yeshua (Is. 40:3, Mal. 4:5-6), but John was not the Poretz, the Breach Maker.

Yeshua says that the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than John, so John cannot be seen as being included in this picture that Micah presents. John dies, but no one enters the Kingdom until Yeshua's death, resurrection and ascension. The Shepherd (*Poretz*-Breacher) has made the way for His Flock. This demonstrates the problem in accepting rabbinic interpretation of Scripture *over* Scripture. Sometimes rabbinic interpretation can be very helpful, but to swallow everything the Rabbis proclaim would be to find oneself renouncing Yeshua.

⁷³ See Num. 23:19-24; 24:3-9; 2nd Sam. 7:10-13, 16, 24; 2nd Chron. 21:7; Ps. 2; 48; 102:16-22; 105:7-11; Isaiah 1:26-27; 2:1-3; 4:2-6; 9:3-4, 6-7; 12:1-6; 14:1-2, 32; 16:5; 24:23; 25:6-10; 26:1-6; 27:6; 28:5; 29:7-8, 22-24; 30:19, 26; 31:4-5; 32:15-20; 33:5, 20-22, 24; 34:8; 35:1-10; 41:8-20; 44:21-23; 45:17, 25; 49:13; 52:8-10; 54:1-17; 60:1-22; 61:4-7; 62:1-12; 63:7; 65:17-25; 66:10-13, 20-24; Jer. 23:5-8; 30:3-24; 31:1-15, 23-28, 31-40; 32:37-44; 33:6-26; 34:15; 35:2; 50:18-20; 51:5, 10, 19, 45; Ezk. 16:60-63; 28:25-26; 34:11-31; 36:6-15, 22-27; 37:11-14, 15-28; 38:1-23; 39:23-29; 43:1-7; 47:13-23; 48:1-29; Hosea 1:10-11; 2:16-23; 3:5; 11:8-11; 13:14; 14:4-7; Joel 2:18-19, 23-32; 3:1-2, 12-21; Amos 9:14-15; Zephaniah 3:8-20; Zech. 2:4-5, 12; 8:18-19, 23; 9:16; 10:6; 12:1-10; 13:1-2; 14:1-21; Mal. 3:3-4, 11-12; Rom. 11:1-12:3; Rev. 21:1-12; 22:16, etc.

See also Jer. 2:1-3; 3:14; Hosea 2:19-20; cf. Is. 62:4.

⁷⁴ Christian teachers place their anti-Mosaic Law theology upon Scriptures, like Mt. 11:13 and Lk. 16:16, for Mosaic Law is what "Law" means here, Law being coupled with "Prophets" (cf. Mt. 5:17-19), by teaching that "Jesus is saying that Mosaic Law has passed away with the coming of the Kingdom of God." Yeshua, though, wasn't speaking against Mosaic Law or saying that it had no part in the Kingdom. He was declaring an obvious fact—*until* John the Baptist came, the Kingdom of Heaven hadn't been proclaimed, but with John it was now be-

Breach Maker, as George Ladd might have said,⁷⁵ proclaimed that the Kingdom was here now and on the horizon, and Christians have entered into it, and will enter into its fullness on Judgment Day as new creatures in Messiah Yeshua.⁷⁶

ing proclaimed. That's all. Yeshua's words didn't have anything to do with Mosaic Law being nullified by the proclamation of His Kingdom coming to Israel, as Yeshua clearly speaks of *in the very next verse!* "It is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Law to fail," (Luke 16:17).

Mosaic Law, as defined by Yeshua, not the Rabbis nor the Church (Jer. 31:31-34; Mt. 5-7; 15:1-20; Rom. 3:20, 31; 7:7, 12, 14; Heb. 8:10; 10:16), is God's holy lifestyle for every Christian. It's God's Way to walk out one's faith in Messiah Yeshua. The Way that Christians walk out their faith in Christ today, and for the past 1,900 years, is the Pope's Way. Sunday, Easter and Xmas, along with the eating of unclean meats such as pig, are not presented in the New Testament, let alone endorsed or commanded.

For articles and my book (#13) on why Mosaic Law is God's Way of walking out our faith in His Son, read:

1. [A Letter to Pastors](#)
2. [A Snapshot of Church History and Mosaic Law](#)
3. [Grace, Holiness and the Pharisaic Church](#)
4. [Hebrews and the Change of the Law](#)
5. [Law 102](#)
6. [Law and Grace](#)
7. [Nailed to the Cross—Col. 2:14](#)
8. [No Longer Under the Law?](#)
9. [Take the Quiz! Five Quick Questions about the New Testament](#)
10. [Ten Ways Yeshua Fulfilled The Law](#)
11. [The Feasts of Israel and the Church](#)
12. [The Feasts of Israel as Time Markers After the Resurrection](#)
13. [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#)
14. [The Two Triangles of the NT](#)

⁷⁵ Theologian George Eldon Ladd had the insightful understanding that the Kingdom of God was both "here and now, and in the future." Ladd failed to see what Mt. 11:12 was about, teaching that the middle voice was how the verb was to be seen, with the Kingdom of coming violently. "God's rule makes its way with great force and keen enthusiasts lay hold on it, i.e., want to share in it." George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI revised edition 1993), chapter 5, The New Age of Salvation, the second page.

⁷⁶ 2nd Corinthians 5:17.

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