

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah
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What is Torah?

A More Complete Understanding

One Torah shall be to him that is homeborn, and to the stranger that sojourns among you.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:49

There is only one Torah for everyone? But isn't there one set of instructions for the Jewish people (the Old Testament) and another set of instructions for the Christians (the New Testament)?

Literally, "Torah" means "instruction" or "direction". The word "Torah" comes from a root word meaning "to throw, cast or shoot - to hit the mark". But if a person does not know what the mark is, how can they hit the mark? How will a person be able to aim, if he does not know where to aim?

Most people will understand that the TaNaK (Old Testament) and the Brit Chadashah (New Testament) are Scripture, or YHWH's instruction to His people. But are these the only instructions that He gives to His people?

What we will show in this study, is that the written Scripture is not a complete understanding of what comprises Torah. And if a talmid (disciple) of Yeshua is to walk in complete obedience to YHWH, then that talmid had better have a proper understanding of just exactly what Torah is.

Torah is Eternal!

Tehillim [Psalm] 119:89

Forever, YHWH, Your Word stands firm in Heaven.

That which makes up Torah, YHWH has firmly established in the Heavenly abode forever, showing that Torah is eternal. Not only is His Torah forever in the spiritual realm, but it is forever in the physical realm as well; at least as long as the physical realm lasts.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 31:24

And it came about, when Moshe finished writing the words of this Torah in a book until they were complete.

Note the close intimate link between the word (Hebrew - *davar*) and the Torah. They are actually inseparable. One thing that is vital to understand, is that the Torah of Moshe is actually a record of YHWH's spoken word or instructions to His people. Furthermore, Moshe wrote all the words of the Torah down. What this should teach us, is that the Torah Moshe is complete and nothing needs to be added to it.

Many times in Scripture we find words to the effect that tell us that YHWH is speaking. When we come to these places in Scripture, we need to listen very carefully in our spirit. We will deal with this more below.

Tehillim [Psalm] 119:160

The sum of Your word is Truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

Truth is everlasting. Truth never ceases to be. Every commandment and ordinance of YHWH, as a vital part of Torah, is eternal, and as we will see this includes His Voice.

Yeshayahu [Isaiah] 40:8

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our Elohim stands forever.

Those things in the physical realm may wither and pass into oblivion, but YHWH's word, commandments, instructions, judgments, and ordinances will forever stand. The words that YHWH speaks to His people are not idle and we are not to take them lightly. The things that YHWH speaks (His Voice) are not frivolous. What they are to us is our life. Until we come to understand this truth we cannot have the proper moorings to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

In the temporal physical world that we exist, where everything is passing away, having something Eternal to grasp onto can be comforting. But how do you really take hold of this Torah?

Torah is Set-apart!

Romiyah [Romans] 7:12

So then, the Torah is set-apart, and the commandment is set-apart and righteous and good.

The Torah was and is, good and righteous. It is set-apart (holy) because He is Set-apart.

When a person lives as if Mashiach did away with the Torah (Law), that person is saying that Torah is not eternal, that it is not set-apart (holy). That person in essence is calling Scripture wrong and a lie, thus calling YHWH a liar. It would not seem like a wise thing to do, to call YHWH a liar! Would that not be the ultimate in folly?

Torah cannot pass away, because Torah is eternal. YHWH made the Eternal Torah flesh and He dwelt among us. This was a manifestation of Elohim.

Yochanan [John] 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and Elohim was the Word.

Here we see that the Word (Davar, which is synonymous for Torah) is actually just an extension (or manifestation) of YHWH as Elohim.

Yochanan [John] 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father, full of Grace and Truth.

The difference between the written Torah and Yeshua as the Torah made flesh, is more academic than actual. To claim that Torah (The Law) has been done away with is not only foreign to Scripture, but it cannot stand up to reason. Since Yeshua is our only true Hope of Salvation, if He (as the Torah made flesh) has been done away with, what hope do we have? None!

Torah - The Voice of YHWH

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 4:30

When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to YHWH your Elohim and listen to His Voice.

It would do the reader well to read the above passage several times.

Did you?

Perhaps you should commit this passage to memory so that it truly sinks into the depths of your ruach (spirit).

If you go and read the context of this passage you will find that Yisrael (Israel) will be taken into captivity because of not heeding (obeying) the Voice of YHWH. Furthermore, it will not be until the latter days (that's now) that we as a nation will truly heed and obey His Voice.

And if that is now, and it is, then how can a person obey His Voice if he cannot hear His Voice? When was the last time you heard His Voice?

Do you know what His Voice sounds like?

If you always surround yourself with the noise of this present darkness (TV, radio, secular music, etc.) then how is it that you will be able to hear His Voice? Do you want to hear His voice?

Yochanan [John] 10:1-5

1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.

2 "But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.

3 "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.

4 "When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

5 "And a stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

Whose voice do you hear? Whose voice do you obey? Are you following the voice of a stranger and a robber? Or can you hear the Voice of the Master and obey Him?

Let us back up for just a moment and look at some passages that will teach us just why we as a nation are, where we are, today.

Results of Not Obeying the Voice of YHWH

B'reshit (Genesis) 3:8-10

8 And they heard the sound of YHWH Elohim walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the face of YHWH Elohim among the trees of the garden.

9 Then YHWH Elohim called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 And he said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."

From the very beginning of the existence of mankind we have been attempting (albeit futilely) to hide ourselves from hearing His Voice. We are ashamed of ourselves, because of our wrong (Torah breaking) living. So we fill our lives with busyness and noise so we do not have to hear His Voice. We hide.

That is not a good place for YHWH to find us, hiding from Him.

Did Adam and Chavah (Eve) have before them a written Torah? No. What did they have? They had the verbal instructions of YHWH not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Did they obey the instructions given by the Voice of YHWH? No. The result was expulsion from Gan Eden (Garden of Eden).

It is not a good thing to attempt to hide from the sound of His Voice.

Take careful note of the following passages!

Shemot [Exodus] 15:26

And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the Voice of YHWH your Elohim, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I [YHWH] will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on Mitzrayim (Egypt); for I, YHWH, am your Healer."

One of the first things that YHWH told His people after delivering them from the bondage of Mitzrayim (Egypt) was what He truly desired from them; i.e., to obey His Voice. If they made the very unwise choice not to obey His Voice, then the consequences of that choice would be that they would suffer the same types of plagues as He had heaped upon the Mitzri (Egyptians).

According to the above passage as well as others, if YHWH finds us hiding from the sound of His Voice, then He must discipline us. This includes putting the plagues mentioned above on us. This would not be the best that He has for us. He certainly does this for our good, to bring us to repentance, but His best would be for us to hear His Voice and then obey Him.

I do not know of anyone who would really want any of these plagues upon them. You probably don't know of anyone that would want these plagues upon them either, correct? So, the only way not to have these plagues placed upon us by YHWH is to hear and obey His Voice!

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 13:17-18

"And nothing from that which is put under the ban shall cling to your hand, in order that YHWH may turn from His burning anger and show compassion on you and make you increase, just as He has sworn to your fathers, if you will listen to the Voice of YHWH your Elohim, keeping all His commandments which I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of YHWH your Elohim."

This passage is quite clear that since there are, in fact, certain things that YHWH has forbidden us to partake of, we should listen to His Voice in this matter and not partake of them. But the problem is that these things tend to be very appealing to the flesh.

Most likely when we repent of our sins and accept Yeshua as our personal Savior we come into His Kingdom with many of those things that are under the ban that are clinging to our hand. These things are not good for us!

It is a continual process to weed these things out of our lives. We get ourselves into trouble with Him when He puts His finger on something in our life and tells us that we must give it up, and then we resist and do not obey His Voice (His personal commandment to us) concerning this matter.

It is when we learn that there is something under the ban in our life and then we make a very unwise choice to attempt to hang on to it, that YHWH must then take to disciplining us. This is not a good place to be. What He is actually doing is testing our personal resolve to obey Him.

Consider the following passage.

Shemot 23:13

"Now concerning everything which I have said to you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other elohim, nor let them be heard from your mouth."

What you are about to read will not be new to most of you. But I would admonish you not to take this writer's word for it; you need to check it out for yourself. Prove all things as the Scripture teaches us. Then obey His Voice in all things.

Consider the English versions of His Hebrew names and titles:

- ✓ יהוה (YHWH), the Tetragrammaton, is commonly translated into English as "LORD" (all capital letters)
- ✓ Elohim is commonly translated into English as "God"
- ✓ Adonai is commonly translated into English as "Lord"
- ✓ Yeshua is commonly translated into English as "Jesus"
- ✓ Mashiach is commonly translated into English as "Christ"

Why?

Why did they use these particular English names and titles rather than transliterate the actual names and titles of the Almighty? After all, they transliterated "Satan" into English, why not our Heavenly Father's name?

Each of these common translations has its roots in the names of other elohim. Since this is true wouldn't this put these English names and titles under a ban from YHWH? Is this not a part of Torah? To be sure, it is!

What each one of does with this truth is our own personal choice. Will we submit our life, in its entirety, to His Voice? Or will we make excuses and do what is right in our own eyes rather than in the eyes of YHWH? Or perhaps, we will succumb to peer pressure and do what the crowd is doing?

Of course, if a person chooses not to obey the Voice of YHWH, then he will receive the curses He heaped upon Mitzrayim (Egypt).

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 28:15

"But it shall come about, if you will not obey YHWH your Elohim, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you."

The above verse is not a trick verse. YHWH says "all" and that is exactly what He means: "all" of His commandments! What He requires of each and every one of us is to obey each and every one of His commandments. That means ALL of His Commandments! We do not have the option to go through His Torah and pick out what we like, smorgasbord style, and ignore the rest.

If we say in our heart, what Pharaoh did, even concerning just one commandment, then we can expect to receive exactly what Pharaoh received: curses. And we will continue to receive those curses (and more) until we repent and start keeping all of His Torah!

Shemot [Exodus] 5:2

But Par'oh [Pharaoh] said, "Who is YHWH that I should obey His Voice to let Yisrael go? I do not know YHWH, and besides, I will not let Yisrael go."

Par'oh did not even want to know Who YHWH was. Besides that, he already had his mind made up as to what he wanted to do and no one, not even YHWH, was going to change his mind. Can YHWH change our mind? Or is our mind already made up? Who is actually sovereign in our life?

If we truly know YHWH, then why do we persist in calling Him by the name of another elohim; i.e., Ba'al [lord]?

Hoshea [Hosea] 2:16-17

"And it will come about in that day," declares YHWH, "That you will call Me Ishi [my Husband] and will no longer call Me Ba'ali [my Lord]. For I will remove the names of the Ba'alim from her mouth, so that they will be mentioned by their names no more."

We are now in the days in which YHWH is in the process of removing the name of "the Lord" [Ba'al] from the mouth of His people. So the question is, do you belong to Him? Have you removed the name of Ba'al [lord] from your mouth?

If not, why not? This is part of Torah! How can you expect to hear the Voice of YHWH your Husband (Ishi) if you are constantly calling on another lover (Ba'al - lord)? To obey His Voice or not to obey His Voice? That is the question.

We have used the commandment concerning His Name, however, this principle can and should be used concerning each and every one of His commandments. Will we listen to another's voice; or, will we hear and obey His Voice? It is a question that we answer every day with our actions! What do your actions say to Him?

Result of Obeying the Voice of YHWH

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 28:1-2

"Now it shall be, if you will diligently obey YHWH your Elohim, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, YHWH your Elohim will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey YHWH your Elohim."

There's that word "all" again. We have a choice to make. We can obey all of Torah and YHWH will bless us. Or, we can choose to not obey all of Torah and YHWH will curse us.

What is taking you so long to decide? Why do you waver between two opinions?

Seriously now, do you want YHWH to curse you? No, of course you don't. So take the narrow road that few find, and begin right now by obeying His Voice.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 30:3

"Then YHWH your Elohim will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where YHWH your Elohim has scattered you."

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 30:8

"And you shall again obey YHWH, and observe all His commandments which I command you today."

I truly believe that the desire of your heart is to have YHWH restore you and to be blessed by YHWH. However, in order to receive His blessing and restoration, we have to obey His Voice. He tells us that this is not difficult for us to do.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 30:11-14

11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach.

12 "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'

13 "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'

14 "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it."

Please take careful note of what this passage is teaching us. No matter what anyone tells you about how it was impossible (difficult, hard) for Yisrael to keep Torah, YHWH tells us otherwise. He says that it is "not too difficult," it is not out of our reach, it is "not in Heaven," it is not across the ocean, rather it is right next to us, even in our mouths and in our hearts. So who do you believe? YHWH? Or some preacher who likes to tickle people's ears?

Consider this one aspect of Torah for just a moment. Is it really that difficult to care for and nurture our children and raise them up to know YHWH and obey His Torah? Or is it more difficult to do as Yisrael did after they were delivered, sacrificing their children in fire to Molech? Hundreds, even thousands, of children were killed to worship Molech and/or Ba'al. Just exactly what is easy about doing that?

Yet, this is exactly what so many in our society do today when they fail to keep Torah and to teach that same Torah to their children.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 30:15-16

"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; in that I commanded you today to love YHWH your Elohim, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that YHWH your Elohim may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

So, we choose life and prosperity by obeying His Voice, which He has commanded us to do. But if not...

There are only two choices to make: life or death. We cannot choose both, and we can only choose life by a willful act of our volition. If we fail to choose life by keeping His Torah, then we choose death by default. The default choice is death, not life.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 30:17-20

"But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other elohim and serve them,

18 "I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You shall not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Yarden to enter and possess it.

19 "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,

20 "by loving YHWH your Elohim, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which YHWH swore to your fathers, to Avraham [Abraham], Yitzchak [Isaac], and Ya'aqov [Jacob], to give them."

Plain and simple, this is Torah: that we obey His Voice.

If not, He will not allow us to live in His land. We must obey every aspect, commandment, judgment, testimony, instruction, and ordinance from Him. If not, we have chosen death.

The Still Small Voice of YHWH

Melekim Aleph [1 Kings] 19:11-12

So He said, "Go forth and stand on the mountain before YHWH." And behold, YHWH was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before YHWH; YHWH was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, YHWH was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, YHWH was not in the fire; and after the fire a Still Small Voice.

We can clamor after all kinds of physical signs in an attempt to validate the Presence of YHWH. But these physical signs are not what we should look for. We should listen for that Still Small Voice. It is the Still Small Voice that will lead and guide and direct our everyday living. But, we have to be able to hear His Voice before His Voice can lead and guide and direct our lives.

Do you hear His Voice leading and guiding you in your everyday living? Why not?

If there is something that is hindering you from hearing His Voice, then you need to first discover what that is, then deal with it in a manner that is pleasing to YHWH, so that you will be able to hear His Voice, thus allowing you to obey His Voice.

Yesheyahu [Isaiah] 30:21

And your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

Here is a wonderful description of how the Still Small Voice guides us in our everyday living. When we begin to consider something that is not according to Torah, the Still Small Voice will speak to us and indicate to us the way of Torah.

But here is the difficulty: if you do not listen (obey), it will get more and more difficult to hear and discern the Still Small Voice, even to the point that when a person is in the mode of not harkening to the Still Small Voice, that person will develop loss of hearing. Left unrepented of, it will eventually lead to a complete loss of spiritual hearing.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 5:11-14

11 Concerning Him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of Elohim, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

How does a talmid (disciple) tell what is good and what is evil? Is it by doing evil? Of course not!

Notice that a talmid is able to discern good from evil by practicing doing good (keeping Torah). Is what you are practicing pleasing to YHWH?

Yochanan Aleph [1 John] 3:4

Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness [Torahlessness]; sin is lawlessness [Torahlessness].

What is it that you practice in your everyday living? Is it Torahlessness? Or is it Torah? Do you practice evil? Or do you practice good?

If you truly have a desire to be able to discern the difference between good and evil, then practice keeping Torah; all of it.

Doing evil, committing sin, dulls a person's spiritual senses.

Doing good, keeping Torah, sharpens a person's spiritual senses.

Moment by Moment Obedience to His Voice

B'reshit 22:1

Now it came about after these things, that Elohim tested Avraham, and said to him, "Avraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

Here we see that YHWH gave Avraham a direct command to go and sacrifice Yitzchak (Isaac), the son of the promise, as a burnt offering. Avraham received a command from the Voice of YHWH.

If Avraham had chosen not to do this thing, it would have been sin to him. Why? It would have been disobedience!

However, Avraham did obey, completely, with a whole heart.

If Avraham would have had an attitude like so many today, Yitzchak would have died that day. But what was it that prevented this great tragedy? Avraham had good hearing. When YHWH spoke, Avraham obeyed immediately.

It was a good thing, too, because YHWH waited until the last possible moment to stay Avraham's hand from the slaying of Yitzchak.

Do you hear and listen as well as Avraham to the Torah (instructions) of His Voice? Are you able to obey on a moment's notice and comply with the updated instructions of His Voice (Torah) as Avraham did?

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand."

Yochanan [John] 10:27-28

May YHWH tune your spiritual ears to Him and may you hear clearly and obey immediately in all things. As a result, may you and your children and your children's children live in the Land and see come to pass all the blessings of YHWH your Elohim with His Kingdom being established on Earth in your lifetime.

Amein & Amein.

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