

The Law #1 Torah & Testimony

Michael Heiss—September 14, 2024

We are going to go into a subject called the Law, God's Law, and it's a big subject. It's too big to cover in one particular session. So, my guess is there will be another session to follow and possibly a third.

At any rate, when we think of the Law, the Law is from the Hebrew word 'Torah.' Actually the root is 'Yarah.' Anytime you go and look up a word in Hebrew Dictionary, it will always give it to you in third person singular. Therefore, there we have 'Yarah.' You can hear the difference 'Yarah'/'Torah.'

So, when we go from the verb, we go to the noun, 'Torah,' which in essence means *teaching*. So, if you're talking about 'Yarah,' you mean:

- to teach
- to instruct
- to point out

The noun portion is the instruction!

Isaiah 8:20: "**To the Law and to the Testimony!** If they do not speak according to this Word, it is because *there is no light* in them."

- look at the word *Law*
- look at the word *Testimony*
- look at the word *Word*

We will find that they are intertwined, they're inseparable. In essence, they form a composite whole, the way God has designed His message—*fascinating!*

Let us now look at two Scriptures where we have the words for *Law* stretched out, sort of like pearls are straight. *The first one is going to be:*

Deuteronomy 11:1: "Therefore, you shall love the LORD your God, and keep **His charge and His statutes and His judgments and His commandments always.**"

Gen. 26—this is the place where God has been talking to Isaac, telling him not go down to the Philistines, stay where you are.

Genesis 26:5: "Because Abraham **obeyed My voice** and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My Laws."

This is a Hebrew method of stringing pearls on a string. Normally you just don't see the Law or the Commandment; from time-to-time you do, but God strings them out.

They're all synonyms and they end up with My Laws, *Torah!* Just before we go to Torah, I thought I would offer a little tidbit here. You will notice it says "...**kept My charge.**..."

- What does that mean?
- Was there a *specific charge* that God gave Abraham as referring to? *No!*

You could find the same thing in Deut. 11, and do it around the other. This is a humorous play on words. God doesn't put it in a superficial manner. The word *kept* and the word *charge* are the same in Hebrew. What do you mean "...kept My charge..." the same?

The Hebrew comes from 'shamar,' which actually in this particular case means to *keep*. What God is saying is, you want to put it literally, '*Abraham did keep what I told him to keep.*' In other words, ***he kept the Word of God!*** He ***kept*** all of God's instructions, but this is how God worded it for some reason.

It took me years and years to figure that out until I finally, you've heard me say so many times, when all else fails, go to the Hebrew! So, Abraham kept what God told him to keep! That's all it means. There's nothing mysterious about it.

Now let's take a look at this word *Torah*. Torah means *instruction*. It is the umbrella word for commandments, statutes, ordinances, precepts, and so forth. It means *any* instruction. You can go to a college course and listen—I don't care what the course is—*torah!*

Has anybody played any board games? Monopoly, Game of Life, Careers, Clue, *you name it*. You open up the game and they're either on the backside of the cover or inside of a few pages. We have what? *The instructions!* In Hebrew that is *torah*. It is simply instruction, instruction from any source, it doesn't matter.

Now let's look at three particular Scriptures where we have *torah* and it's not really from God. It might as well be.

Proverbs 1:8: "My son, hear the instruction of your father and forsake not the law of your mother."

And I remember thinking: What law am I going to get from my mother? Finally, I realized that it says 'Do what mommy says.' That's all it means. Here's mommy, she's baking a cake and making a

dinner, but she's still she's lacking a few ingredients. So, she says, 'Son, here's some money go out the door, down the street, no jaywalking, cross the street, go to the store, buy these items and bring them back.'

That is *the law of the mother!* Do what mommy says. Mommy's instructions. That's all it is. It's not some great concept on a pedestal. Now when we get God's instruction, well, yeah, then we need to put it on a pedestal.

Proverbs 3:1: "My son, do not forget my law..."

Once again, this is the father saying, 'Son, don't forget what I told you to do.' That's all it is.

Proverbs 6:20: "My son, keep your father's commandments, and do not forsake the instruction of your mother."

Again, same word, *torah*. Here we did translate it *instruction*; elsewhere you translated it *law*. It's the same thing, but that's all it means.

As I said, *torah* is the umbrella word. God told us that His Messiah, the Christ, would magnify that Law.

Isa. 42—we see the specific statement, no uncertain terms.

Isaiah 42:21: "The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness sake; He will magnify the Law and make *it* glorious."

He will magnify *the teaching, the instruction!* Did Jesus do that? *Sermon on the Mount!*

Actually, it's kind of cute. I remember, I humorously, in my own life as a sophomore in high school, and for some reason, I don't know how, that the instructor got off all the beatitudes. He asked, 'How many of you have never heard of the beatitudes?'

I kind of sheepishly raised my hand. Nobody else did. And the instructor looked at me and said, 'Oh, well, I can understand why you've never heard of the beatitudes.' It's not exactly a household item in a Jewish home.

Matthew 5:2: "And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying, 'Blessed *are* the poor in spirit...'" (vs 2-3).

Verse 4: "Blessed *are* those who mourn...." *You didn't find this in the Old Testament. He's elevated it!*

Verse 21: "You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not commit

murder; but whoever commits murder shall be subject to judgment.' **But I say to you...**—*He's expanding it! He's elevating it!*

Verse 27: "You have heard that it was said to those in ancient times, 'You shall not commit adultery. **But I say unto you...**" (vs 27-28)—*again, He expanded the Law!*

It is fascinating because God is *the covenant-making God!* He used His Law in two covenants at least to judge the children of Israel when they went into the land.

Deuteronomy 5:30—*God says*: "Go say to them, 'Go into your tents again.' But as for you, you stand here by Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments, which you shall teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I am giving them, to possess it. And you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you..." (vs 30-33).

Deuteronomy 6:1: "Now, these *are* the commandments... [again, you see the trios the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God commanded to teach you..."

Deuteronomy 6 clear thru 28, constitutes a separate covenant that God made with Israel. It is to be part of the testimony that we read earlier in Isaiah.

Deuteronomy 29:1: "These *are* the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb."

This is something completely different. It's all teaching from God, it is all *torah*, but it's a separate covenant. And we will see what God did with this particular covenant; He placed it inside the ark.

Deuteronomy 30:10: "**If** you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes, which are written in this Book of the Law..."

Remember that this is the Book of Torah; it consist of Deuteronomy. This book doesn't consist of anything else. It is the Book of the Law and has a separate status all by itself.

Verse 11: "For this commandment, which I command you today *is* not hidden from you..."

Verse 12: "It *is* not in heaven..."

Verse 13: "Neither *is* it beyond the sea..."

Verse 14: “But the Word *is* very near you...”

Verse 16: “In that I command you this day to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments...”

Deuteronomy 31:9: “And Moses wrote this law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.”

Here is the significance of this book of Deuteronomy.

Verse 10: “And Moses commanded them, saying, ‘At the end of seven years, at the set time of the year of release... [Jubilee year] ...in the Feast of Tabernacles. When all Israel has come to appear before the LORD your God in the place, which He shall choose...’” (vs 10-11).

Now, you and I are blessed. We have this whole book; we can read it any time, day or night. It doesn’t matter. But back then, they only had a scroll, so to speak, and they didn’t even have individual scrolls.

They had one scroll, that tapestry, so to speak, that material, was going to be placed, as we will see, in the Ark, in the tabernacle. That’s one reason we’ll see the Ark of the testimony, the tabernacle of the testimony, because ***this book of Deuteronomy***, as well as God’s Ten Commandments, ***constitute the Testament, the Law,***

Verse 24: “And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this Law in a book until they were finished, *then* Moses commanded the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, saying, ‘Take this Book of the Law, and put it in the side of the Ark of the Covenant...’” (vs 24-26)

Why is it called the Ark of the Covenant? *Because this book of Deuteronomy is a covenant, and this covenant is going to be in the Ark.* Then they’re going to put the Ark in the tabernacle. So, the Tabernacle is going to be the *Tabernacle of the Testimony, because it’s all coming from God! All of it!*

“...and put it in the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD...” (v 26). *So, we have that it went into the Ark of the Covenant!*

Now let us go ahead and consider the *testimony*. Remember in Isaiah 8:20 to the Law and the Testimony; *torah* and *testimony* are very close.

Exodus 40:20: “And he [Moses] took and placed the testimony into the Ark...”

What’s the *testimony*? He’s putting the testimony into the Ark!

“...and set the staves on the Ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the Ark. And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up the veil of the covering, and covered the Ark of the Testimony...” (vs 20-21).

What did he just put in the Ark? *The book of Deuteronomy!*

Therefore, the book of Deuteronomy is also the *Testimony*. So, we’ll see when Isaiah said ‘to the Law and the Testimony,’ meaning ***to the Torah, to God’s instruction and His declaration!***

You know, in the court of law, you’re going to have witnesses and we say they’re going to be sworn in. ‘Raise your right hand’ and all this stuff, and he says, ‘Do you declare, do you affirm whatever the words are going to be that *the testimony* that you are about to give...’ So a testimony is a narration. It’s a declaration of what is going to be said and that it is true.

Exodus 20:1: “And God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I *am* the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage’”

There’s His testimony, His declaration:

Who I am, therefore, because I AM Who I AM and I have authority to declare the Law, the Testimony, and I’m now giving it to you.

Then we have the ten words and they’re given in the form of words.

Isaiah 8:20: “To the Law and to the Testimony! If they do not speak according to this Word...”

The word of the testimony, the word of Torah, the word of what God had given them; it’s all there!

Exodus 31:18: “And He gave to Moses... [this is God speaking on Mt. Sinai] ... when He had made an end of speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone...”

So, here God is declaring His testimony, the Ten Commandments on the tablets of stone constitute the Testimony. God is telling us that

“...tablets of stone, written by the finger of God” (v 18).

Does anybody need any more authority than that? *I don’t think so!* We’ll see how these words all over, they fit together.

Deut. 10—This is Moses speaking to the children of Israel.

Deuteronomy 10 1: “At that time the LORD said to me, ‘Cut out two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to Me into the mountain, and make for yourself an Ark of wood.’”

We’re going to have the Ark constructed.

Verse 2: “And I will write on the tablets the words that were in the first tablets which you broke...”

God maybe chided Moses here a little bit, I’m not sure. But nevertheless, you welcome Moses. Well, we’re having a replacement here.

“...you shall put them in the Ark” (v 2).

So in the Ark of God, we know we have a few things:

- Aaron’s budding rod
- a container of manna
- at least two sections of the Law

Verse 4: “And He wrote on the tablets, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments... [that’s what was on those tablets] ...which the LORD spoke to you in the mountain out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And the LORD gave them to me. And I turned myself and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the Ark, which I had made. And there they are as the LORD commanded me” (vs 4-5).

So, we have the Ark as Testimony, because the covenant, the Law, was there. The tabernacle that housed the Ark was called the Tabernacle of Testimony. That’s why they’re called that. That’s why they’re titled that. So, we see a complete comprehensive picture. That’s what Torah is. ***Torah is the overall instruction from God!***

All of it bears His testimony. He testifies that this is true, full, righteous, because I am the Lord your God No other authority. That’s His declaration. That’s His testimony. The words as a whole are testimony.

Look what Jesus said when He was tempted by the devil; it also confirms what we have just read.

Matthew 4:3: “And when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God...’”—*go ahead and show us! Tempted!* If Jesus had done that, He really wouldn’t have been the Son of God.

Verse 4: “But He answered *and* said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of

God.””

Now, next week, when we go into perhaps some of the statutes and ordinances, but specifically the commandments, one of the words for commandment is ‘peh’—mouth. ***God commands out of His mouth!***

That’s what Jesus just said: by ***every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God***, it’s coming from Him.

That sums up once again, Isaiah 8:20: “To the Law and to the Testimony!the Torah and the Testimony] ...If they do not speak according to this Word...”

What were the words of the Law and the Testimony? ***The word that, as Jesus said, proceeds forth out of the mouth of God!***

“...it is because *there is* no light in them” (v 20).

This sums up today in terms of ***the Torah and Testimony***.

Next time, hopefully we will get into the commandments and the words, what they are. And if time permits in the second section, we’ll also see the difference between statutes and ordinances, because each one has a specific place.

In some cases, it’s like distinction without a difference. In some cases, they are so intertwined that it’s almost impossible to tell whether you’re dealing with an ordinance or a statute. It all depends on circumstances.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Isaiah 8:20
- 2) Deuteronomy 11:1
- 3) Genesis 26:5
- 4) Proverbs 1:8
- 5) Proverbs 3:1
- 6) Proverbs 6:20
- 7) Isaiah 2:21
- 8) Matthew 5:2-4, 21, 27-28
- 9) Deuteronomy 5:30-33
- 10) Deuteronomy 6:1
- 11) Deuteronomy 29:1
- 12) Deuteronomy 30:10-14, 16
- 13) Deuteronomy 31:9-11, 24-26
- 14) Exodus 40:20-21
- 15) Exodus 20:1-2
- 16) Isaiah 8:20
- 17) Exodus 31:18
- 18) Deuteronomy 10:1-5
- 19) Matthew 4:3-4
- 20) Isaiah 8:20

Scripture referenced, not quoted:
Deuteronomy 11; 6-28

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