

# TORAH EXPLAINED

While I have also included these definitions within the article on Salvation, it is important to understand them in regards to what the function and purpose of Torah really is and what it is not.

## DEFINITIONS

- SALVATION            The preservation from and deliverance from harm, ruin or loss as a consequence of sin that was made available to ALL through the death burial and resurrection of Messiah Yeshua.
- TORAH                The Hebrew word is derived from a root word that was used in the realm of archery, meaning to “shoot an arrow” or “hit the mark”. In a broader sense its purpose and function is much the same as the word “Salvation” in that it can instruct and protect us if followed until the return of our Messiah.
- FAITH                Our acceptance of this Truth and our complete trust, reliance and confidence in the “salvation” provided through the actions and example of Yashua the Messiah. It is our faith that determines what we DO in response to the “salvation” that is provided to us.
- WORKS                The things that we do, the actions that we take that demonstrate our “Faith” or lack of faith in the salvation provided by the Messiah. It is our “works” that demonstrate our faith and what we will in the end be judged on when standing before YHWH, our King.
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Many people do not understand or even consider the importance of Torah contained within the Covenant of Moses. Yet when given a closer look at the Bible as a whole we can see that all scripture from Genesis to Revelation contains and returns back to Torah, leading us all to realize the importance of these Words. So, for those who have dismissed Torah, it is impossible to fully grasp the meaning and purpose of the Bible without including all the Words written within its pages.

## COMMON THREAD WOUND WITHIN THE SCRIPTURES

The Revelations	➡	Song of Moses & Song of the Lamb
The Letters	➡	Life in a Covenant Community
The Acts	➡	Torah to the Nations
The Gospels	➡	The Living Torah
The Writings	➡	Encouragement to Live Torah
The Prophets	➡	Return back to Torah
Torah	➡	YHWH's Instruction

## DEFINITION OF TORAH

By definition the Hebrew word, “Torah” is derived from a root word that was used in the realm of archery. The root word means to “shoot an arrow” or “hit the mark”. But because of the complexity of the Hebrew language it can also mean:

- Direction / Teachings / Instructions

It can also mean from the root letters -

- Teacher (someone who instructs students)
- Parent (someone who instructs children and also disciplines them)

If you look closely you can see that there is a pattern here and that all these words are connected.

In the Greek it is usually rendered as “nomos” which broadly means “law”. Depending on the context in which it is written it should be rendered as simply, “YHWH’s teachings” or even just Torah. Example:

When Yeshua quotes from the Book of Psalms when dealing with a group of religious people who oppose Him.

*John 10:34 “Yahshua answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are YHVHs”*

Yeshua is quoting from:

*Psalms 82:6 “I have said, Ye are YHVHs; and all of you are children of the most High.”*

The word Law in Greek here is nomos, but then are we to assume that the Psalms was and is “the Law?”

Another example would be Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:21, writes:

*“<sup>21</sup> In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, says YHWH.”*

Here again the word Law is nomos, however Paul is quoting from Isaiah 28:11, to be specific.

*“<sup>11</sup> For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.”*

So once again are we to assume also that the Prophets of the Old Testament is also included in the Law?

In addition to these and many more references, the Torah is also referenced to:

- The Talmud (Jewish Law and practical applications of the Scriptures)
- The Tanakh (complete old testament)
- The first five books of the Bible (also called the Pentateuch)
- The covenant YHVH gave to Moshe on Mount Sinai
- Or any teaching of the first five books of the Bible

To keep things simple for now, when I mention Torah, I am speaking of the first five books of the Bible and teachings within those books.

The Torah is more than just a book of Laws although it does contain many of those, which if one goes through it will find over 600 of them that cover all aspects of life and situations.

Let's examine its contents in more detail and we shall find that it has more to offer:

- 1) TEACHINGS – the Torah is YHWH's teachings. This focuses on man's needs, including his need to know who YHWH is and what His righteousness looks like.

Torah is a document in which YHWH reveals Himself to mankind and taught us about Himself and His righteousness.

In Torah one can learn about theological concepts, which are expanded on throughout the rest of scripture, like; sin, sacrifice, salvation, sanctification, and Messiah the one who accomplishes it all.

- 2) COVENANT – The Torah is a covenant. By this we mean that Torah is a legally binding agreement between YHWH and His people. (See article on 8 Covenants of the Bible)

The Torah refers to itself several times as a covenant (brit). Two examples of this are:

*Exodus 34:27 <sup>"27</sup> And the Lord said unto Moses, write thou -- these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel."*

*Deuteronomy 29:1 <sup>"1</sup> These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded -- Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb."*

Since Torah is a covenant, both parties involved are subject to certain legal obligations. YHWH the one who initiated the covenant, legally binds Himself to keep His Word which He spoke in the covenant. Israel, (all those who faithfully follow and obey YHWH), the recipient of this agreement, is likely bound to do the same thing.

Historically, written treaties between nations and their conquered or vassal nations have been examined and compared with Torah. The similarities in form and structure can be easily seen if you know what you are looking for.

To illustrate this, let's compare the typical form of an ancient Hittite treaty with the format of the book of Deuteronomy.

- Preamble: a basic introductory paragraph of the covenant
- Historical Prologue: the acts of the great king, what he has done for the vassal nation
- Stipulations: the main bulk of the treaty/covenant, the expectations of the vassal nation
- Blessings and Curses: the things that will happen to the vassal nation if they comply with the covenant or do not comply with the covenant

- Witnesses: the signatures of those important people who witness the enactment of the covenant
- Means of Succession (sometimes): provision in the covenant for who takes over after the great king.
- Provision for Depositing the Covenant (sometimes): discusses where the covenant or copies of the covenant will be stored

Now let us compare this format with Deuteronomy:

- Preamble (Deuteronomy 1:1-5): gives basic introductory remarks about the Book of Deuteronomy
- Historical Prologue (Deuteronomy 1:6-4:49): tells some of the great things the Great King (YHVH) has done for Israel
- Stipulations (Deuteronomy 5:1-26:19): the bulk of the book, known to laymen as “law”; more accurately, the stipulations which YHVH, the Great King, has given to Israel to maintain this covenant (more on that later)
- Blessings and Curses (Deuteronomy 27-30): the things which YHVH promised would happen to Israel if they keep the covenant or break the covenant
- Witnesses (Deuteronomy 30:19): YHVH calls upon heaven and earth to witness this covenant.
- Succession (Deuteronomy 31:1-8): YHVH provides for Joshua to follow Moshe when he dies.
- Deposit/Reading (Deuteronomy 31:9-13): provision made to store the covenant in the ark, and to read it to all the people at a certain time.

This information leads us to believe that the Torah is not just a list of do’s and don’ts. It is, instead, a critically important document describing the legally binding relationship between Israel and YHVH.

Furthermore, it is a document that was given by YHVH to serve as the national constitution for the nation of Israel.

- 3) KETUBAH - There also seems to be considerable evidence within the Torah that would prompt one to label it a ketubah.

A ketubah is a formal, written document, which spells out the terms of the Jewish marriage contract between husband and wife. “The ‘ketubah’ also has a symbolic meaning.

Since the bride and the groom represent Israel and YHVH at Sinai, when the Torah was given, the ketubah represents the ‘book of covenant’—the Torah!

The first hint of this is found in Exodus 6:6-7. In this passage, YHVH tells Moshe what He intends to do through him for Israel.

- 1) YHWH says that He will “set them apart,”
- 2) He will “deliver” them from their bondage (bring them out from under the yoke of slavery),
- 3) He will “redeem” them, and He will “take” them to be His people.

The last verb, “will take,” is used elsewhere in the Tanakh — among other uses — to describe what happens when a man “takes” a woman to be his wife. In the context of Exodus 6, then, it appears that YHWH is betrothing Israel to be His wife. When is the wedding?

According to traditional Jewish thinking, the wedding took place at Mount Sinai.

Although the biblical text does not specify that a wedding was taking place the similarities between the phenomena at Mount Sinai and a traditional Jewish wedding are striking.

- CHUPPAH - a canopy. We can see this in *Exodus 19:9* when YHVH says that, “I will come to you in a thick cloud...” The cloud was a covering which can be seen to symbolize the chuppah under which the bride meets the Groom.
- ENDEARING NAME - Every groom has an endearing name for the bride that reminds him of how much she means to him. YHVH gave Israel such a name. In *Exodus 19:5-7*, YHVH tells Israel that she is His “treasured possession.” The Hebrew word is *segulah*.
- Thus, when YHVH calls Israel His *segulah*, He is using it as a most endearing term. He cares for all His creation but considers Israel His special bride.
- KETUBAH - One of the main ingredients of the wedding is the ketubah itself. This is the document that shows that the marriage is legal.
- It is also the document that serves to remind both parties of their mutually agreed-upon responsibilities to make that marriage work well. In this case, the ketubah is Torah summarized in *Exodus 20*.
- It is the marriage agreement between YHVH and Israel. YHVH even provided two copies— one for Himself, and one for them. Both were to be kept in the ark.
- Thus, we read in *Exodus 31:18*, “When He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moshe the two tablets of the pact [covenant], stone tablets inscribed with the finger of YHVH.”
- WEDDING RING - The ring serves as an outward symbol of the marriage covenant between the two partners.
- Where is the ring in this marriage? It is found in *Exodus 31:12-17*. In verse 13, we are told that YHVH gave *Shabbat as a sign* (אִוֶּרֶת, “oat,”) between Himself and the children of Israel throughout the ages.
- In fact, so important is Shabbat as a sign of the covenant that it is repeated once more in this passage (verse 17). Hence, Shabbat is the ring, the outward sign of this marriage covenant.

4) YESHUA’S STAMP OF APPROVAL – The Torah is unique because of the way that Yeshua related to it.

With Yeshua there was an underlying assumption about Torah throughout His teachings.

The assumption is that He clearly perceived that YHWH's covenant people are to have a living, meaningful, and ongoing relationship to Torah.

In other words, in Yeshua's thinking, one of the purposes of Torah is to describe the lifestyle of the redeemed community.

Matthew 5:17-20 teaches this very clearly.

#### TEACHING ABOUT THE LAW (TORAH)

<sup>17</sup> *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.*

<sup>18</sup> *For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

<sup>19</sup> *Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>20</sup> *For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

There is another important passage from the gospels which gives Yeshua's stamp of approval for the Torah.

In Luke 24, following His resurrection, Yeshua revealed Himself to two of His followers while walking with them on the road to Emmaus.

*"Beginning with Moshe [the Torah] and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures."*

Could it be that with the use of the word "fulfilled" He was saying that in order for Torah (and the rest of the Tanakh) to be interpreted properly, one must see how they speak about Himself (Yeshua)?

Yeshua was saying, emphatically, that one of the major purposes for the Torah was to understand it in such a way as to see Him in all of its teachings.

Yeshua's life was one of perfectly living out the written Torah. His teaching perfectly clarified and explained the Torah.

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#### UNDERSTANDING PAUL!

There are at least two very important hermeneutical principles one must keep in mind when seeking to understand Paul.

- 1) 1<sup>st</sup> Principle – the concept of keeping the harmony of the Scriptures intact. In other words, Scripture cannot contradict Scripture. (Read Acts 21:15-26)

**Note:** Paul would not have lived according to Torah and then taught other believers that Torah has no place in their lives. This would make Paul a hopelessly contradictory teacher, causing the Scriptures to be contradictory as well.

- 2) 2<sup>nd</sup> Principle – is this context! Both the immediate context as well as the context of the whole book or letter is important.

**Note:** Let us take Paul's letter to the Galatians, for example. It is essential to know that the context for Galatians has to do with people who believed that one must obey the Torah in order to be saved.

Because of this heresy, it stands to reason that Paul's letter would contain many rather negative statements concerning such a use of Torah.

But such statements should all be interpreted in light of the context of the letter.

In Galatians, it was not Paul's primary purpose to teach about how to apply Torah to the life of the believer.

His primary purpose was to emphasize that one may not live according to Torah in order to earn, merit, or keep one's justification.

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## PAUL'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE PURPOSES OF TORAH.

- 1) Torah is not to be observed in order to gain justification before YHWH!

Romans 3:20 teaches, "By the works of the Torah [or any legal system, according to the context of Romans 2-3], no flesh will be justified in His sight."

People were trying to observe the Torah (as well as other legal systems) in order to be saved. To such people Paul emphatically said, "The Torah is useless!"

Why useless? Because Torah is to be the lifestyle for someone who is already justified / redeemed.

- 2) Torah helps man to recognize his own sinfulness.

In Romans 3:20 Paul says "...for through the Torah comes the knowledge of sin." The Greek word translated "knowledge" should be rendered "recognition."

*Torah does not tell people what sin is, rather, it is through Torah that people can see the sinfulness of their sin!*

3) Torah helps to bring about YHWH's wrath.

*Romans 4:15 says, "For the Torah brings about wrath ..." Once again, knowing the context of this verse is extremely important. Paul's teaching in Romans stressed that if one tries to use Torah for the purpose of achieving justification before YHVH, then his attempt will backfire!*

*He will only discover that he cannot obey it perfectly Thus, by failing to obey it, the only thing that awaits him is not justification, but condemnation.*

*Justification has always been and always will be granted as a gift from YHVH, on the basis of one's personal trust in what Yeshua did for him in His atoning death and subsequent resurrection.*

*If a person attempts to earn justification by trying to obey the Torah, then for him the Torah will only serve to condemn. The Torah was not designed for such a purpose.*

4) The Torah acts as a protector.

*In the beginning I explained the meanings of the word Torah and then using the Hebrew root letters we can see that it can mean even more. The two that I would like to cover more in detail are:*

- *Teacher (someone who instructs students)*
- *Parent (someone who instructs children and also disciplines them)*

*Yes, as Pastor's (teachers) it now becomes your role to protect the people with your understanding of Torah. One who instructs, the people whom YHWH brings to you to disciple.*

*It is not your job to go out and bring the people into the flock, that is YHWH's job to awaken the people, but it is your job to guide, instruct, teach, listen, answer, protect, preserve and direct them back to Torah for learning.*

*It is through your instructions and guidance in Torah that they will be preserved and protected until the time that YHWH uses them.*

*In Galatians 3:22 we can once again see that Paul using words like "shut up unto the faith" which has been mis-interpreted as being held captive or in custody by the Torah. This is wrong of course and is meant to be interpreted, protected by Torah.*

*So, Paul is teaching that the Torah can function as a protector of YHWH's children, helping to preserve their lives "until the date set by the Father", (Galatians 4:2) when the Spirit of YHWH would lead them to the Teacher, the Messiah.*

5) The Covenant (Law) Words.

*The word Torah as we have said, can mean, teaching or instructions, but there are so many words but for this point lets focus our attention on three words; mishpatim, mitzvot, and chukim.*

*In English these words have been translated: judgements, commandments, and ordinances.*

*These words represent the legal aspect of the Torah. Because of these words, the Torah is a "Law".*

*It is not a law that must be obeyed in order to secure or earn YHWH's righteousness.*

*No, it is a law that functions as a protective barrier. The judgements, commandments and ordinances, along with other teachings of YHWH, all serve to protect YHWHs people.*

*This protection operates in two ways. 1) For the children on their way to Messiah, 2) for YHWH's holy community of the redeemed.*

*Understand what I am saying here. Anyone who lives with this community, who tries to follow Torah will be protected by it and YHWH. BUT, it does not mean that the person who is living within the borders of the Torah is automatically safe spiritually or "saved".*

*It only means that the Torah community is intended to help preserve his life awaiting the time set by the Father, for his real moment of salvation.*

*Why would anyone choose to live in a Torah community?*

*If a person lives under the benefit of a holy community which follows the Torah, he will, then, receive a more complete description of the Teacher, Yeshua.*

*His mind will be preserved from inaccuracies and false images of what the Messiah looks like. Also, if he knows what and who the Messiah is, then he will be more likely to recognize Him when He returns and what it is that he is living for and towards.*

6) Two Kingdoms Protection

Two spiritual realities exist regardless of whether or not we wish to accept them.

The first being the Kingdom of Light (YHWH's Kingdom) and second being that of the kingdom of darkness (Satan's kingdom). See Romans 5: 12-21 to see more on these two Kingdoms.

The ruling power of the kingdom of light is life. The ruling power of the kingdom of darkness is death.

If the kingdom of darkness exists, it is or at least should be, critical for all of us to know where the boundaries of such a kingdom are located, so that we may not participate in that kingdom.

By YHWH's grace and mercy, YHWH has described to us exactly where those boundaries are between the two opposite and diametrically opposed kingdoms.

The boundaries are identified for us in the Torah.

Because the Torah tells us the truth and describes the difference between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean, between life and death, it is, therefore, a protection for us and a written revelation of the grace of YHVH.

Every man, woman, or child who chooses not to live within the teachings of YHVH, which produce life, is consigned to a place outside of the blessing and protection that these teachings establish.

*Deuteronomy 30:19-20*

*"<sup>19</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed; <sup>20</sup> to love the LORD thy YHVH, to hearken to His voice, and to cleave unto Him; for that is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."*

With this viewpoint, we can now begin to understand some of the seemingly more particular teachings of Torah, especially the so called "legal" sections. These legal sections have to do with the theocracy of the Kingdom of Light.

This is also the reason behind the commands of Torah regarding those living in Israel who violate the Torah and must be put out of the community.

One of the purposes of Israel was to be a place of safety, blessing, and teaching.

When a person violated this sacred place, he had to be removed from it for the sake of the rest of the holy community, until he either repented or was judged by YHVH.

This principle is also true of our communities within our flocks.

## 7) To Enjoy the Blessings (\*\*IMPORTANT!\*\*)

To understand this concept, we will need to examine how Paul compares the two Covenants in Galatians 3:10-21.

<sup>10</sup> *For as many as are of works of Torah are under the curse, for it has been written, "**Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all that has been written in the Book of the Torah, to do them.**"* <sup>Deu 27:26.</sup> <sup>11</sup> *And that no one is declared right by Torah before Elohim is clear, for "**The righteous shall live by belief.**"* <sup>Hab 2:4.</sup> <sup>12</sup> *And the Torah is not of belief, but "**The man who does them shall live by them.**"* <sup>Lev 18:5.</sup> <sup>13</sup> *Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Torah, having become a curse for us – for it has been written, "**Cursed is everyone who hangs upon a tree.**"* <sup>Deu 21:23.</sup> <sup>14</sup> *in order that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the nations in Messiah יהושיע, to receive the promise of the Spirit through belief.*

<sup>15</sup> Brothers, as a man I say it: a covenant, even though it is man's, yet if it is confirmed, no one sets it aside, or adds to it. <sup>16</sup> But the promises were spoken to Abraham, and to his Seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "**And to your Seed,**"<sup>16b</sup> Gen 12:7 who is Messiah. (<sup>16c</sup>Also see Gen 17:7, Gen 22:18, Gen 24:7). <sup>17</sup> Now this I say, Torah, that came four hundred and thirty years later, does not annul a covenant previously confirmed by Elohim in Messiah, so as to do away with the promise. <sup>18</sup> For if the inheritance is by Torah, it is no longer by promise, but Elohim gave it to Abraham through a promise. <sup>19</sup> Why, then, the Torah? It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. And it was ordained through messengers in the hand of a mediator. <sup>20</sup> The Mediator, however, is not of one, but Elohim is one. <sup>21</sup> Is the Torah then against the promises of Elohim? Let it not be! For if a torah had been given that was able to make alive, truly righteousness would have been by Torah." (Galatians 3:10-21)

The two covenants are the one YHWH made with Abraham in Genesis 12 and the one He made with Moshe in Exodus 19, the Torah.

The covenant with Abraham is described as a Covenant in which YHWH promises an inheritance to His people which is to be received by faith.

Notice the three elements: promise, inheritance and faith.

The promise of an inheritance was given by the grace of YHVH. The expected Covenant response was faith. This is clearly taught in Genesis 15.

Here YHWH promises the inheritance that Abraham was to receive by faith.

In regard to the Covenant with Moshe (Torah), Paul first says in Galatians 3:12 that this is not a faith Covenant. (*12 And the law (Torah) is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them.*) \*\*Which means we have to live this out, through our actions.

In other words, the expected Covenant response was not faith, but obedience.

Second, it was not a Covenant of promise. It did not promise the inheritance, it merely protected the already redeemed people so that they could enjoy and fully participate in the blessings of the inheritance!

Moreover, Galatians 3:17 specifically says that the Covenant with Moshe did not do away with the Covenant with Abraham. Instead, they complement each other.

*17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of YHVH in Messiah, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.*

So, what this is basically saying is this: people were not saved by obeying the Torah.

They were saved by trusting in the promises of YHWH. To participate in the eternal inheritance, the Covenant response is faith.

The Torah was given to the redeemed community, not to the unsaved community, so that the community could be maintained and protected.

Obedience, therefore is the required Covenant response. This is what we see in Galatians 3.

A person cannot receive the full blessings of Torah, the Covenant with Moshe, unless they have first have entered into the Covenant with Abraham.

The first covenant with Abraham gave Israel the physical promises, which were also a picture of the spiritual relationship we have with YHWH.

They are also symbolic of the promises of inheritance all believers have through faith in Yeshua.

For one who trusts in YHWH for the promises, the proper order of faith and obedience is set the sequence in which the covenants were given.

*Basically, faith must come before obedience!*

The kind of faith that is accepted by YHWH is one that naturally flows into obedience.

If someone believes that obeying Torah will secure the promises by obedience to Torah, all they could hope for at best would be some physical protection, and a greater knowledge of spiritual things.

But they would not be redeemed, (saved) nor would they have any kind of relationship with YHWH just because they are obedient to the Torah.

So, let's round this up. There are at least three levels on which the Torah serves as a protector.

- 1) First, (anyone) if obeyed, it protects the nation to enjoy its inheritance
- 2) Second, (redeemed) it protects the individual redeemed people within the nation to fully enjoy their own inheritance, because they understand and participate in the miracle of redemption as it is portrayed by the commandments of Torah.
- 3) Third, (unsaved) for those who do not know the Teacher (Messiah), it protects them until the time when YHWH will reveal Himself to them.

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## WHY DO WE FOLLOW TORAH?

Because it is who we are as new creations. Without following Torah, it would be like trying to get through a maze in the dark with no sense of direction. The Torah acts like a rope that we hold onto as we traverse the

maze in the darkness. The one person who has already solved the maze, Messiah, shows us the way. Without the Torah which guides us, by helping us to understand righteousness according to the Kingdom of Heaven, and understanding how to recognize “sin”, we are able now with the help of the Ruach, to reach the Kingdom through Yeshua Messiah who is the door at the end of the maze.

When we read of the redeemed person as described by the precepts of Torah, we are, in reality, reading a description of who YHVH has made us in the Messiah.

Let us return again to the concept of the mirror image referred to in Ya’acov

*So, rid yourselves of all vulgarity and obvious evil, and receive meekly the Word implanted in you that can save your lives. Don’t deceive yourselves by only hearing what the Word says, but to it! For whoever hears the Word but doesn’t do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror, who looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what he looks like. But if a person looks closely into the perfect Torah, which gives freedom, and continues, becoming not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work it requires, then he will be blessed in what he does. (James 1:22-25)*

Here we learn the importance of being doers of the Word instead of listeners only.

The illustration is of a person looking at himself in a mirror, but verse 25 describes that “mirror” as the Torah. (Though translated “law” in nearly every English translation, it is actually Torah.)

He who does not do the Word is one who looks at his face in the Torah and immediately forgets what he looks like. In that state therefore, he does not do the Word.

But the person who sees himself in the mirror—the Torah—and remembers what he looks like, this is the one who does the Word. Thus, fulfilling the purpose of Torah.

When we look into the mirror of the Torah, our reflection is that of a redeemed person as described therein.

The individual teachings, in essence, describe what the redeemed one looks like. Because it is Yeshua who has made us new, made us the righteousness of YHVH (2 *Corinthians* 5:21), all that is left for us to do is to choose to walk in that new life—the righteous life of Yeshua—the life of Torah.

Therefore, we do not follow Torah as though it were merely a list of do’s and don’ts.

We follow it because it is written on our hearts.

It is who we are as new creations.

It comes naturally to us because YHVH has made us into new people!

But unless we know what our real spiritual identity is, we can’t enter into the whole realm of our new life in Messiah that is available through the Torah.