119 MINISTRIES

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The Torah: Instructions for All Who Follow the God of the Bible

What Is the Torah?

When we hear the word "Torah," many automatically think of a rigid set of laws or religious regulations. But that view fails to capture what the Torah really is.

In Hebrew, the word "*Torah*" (תּוֹרָה) derives from the root word "*yarah*" (יָרָה), which fundamentally means "to throw," "to cast," or "to shoot," such as an archer shooting an arrow or the heavens sending forth rain. From this imagery, the concept of "instruction" emerges — not merely as rules to follow, but as guidance that is aimed at a target: righteous living. Just as an archer intentionally directs an arrow toward a mark, so YHWH gives us his Torah as precise direction for how we are to walk. Although commonly translated as "law," Torah is more accurately understood as "instruction" or "teaching" — the Creator's intentional guidance, aimed at leading us into a life of faithfulness and blessing.

The Torah is the foundation of God's relationship with mankind. It teaches us:

- how to love and serve YHWH in the way he desires,
- how to walk in righteousness and justice toward others, and
- how to live in harmony with the design of creation itself.

The written Torah consists of the first five books of the Bible — Genesis through Deuteronomy — but its instruction and principles are echoed throughout the rest of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation.

Common Objections: Is the Torah Only for Israel?

One of the most widespread teachings in modern Christianity is the idea that the Torah was only given to the Jewish people, and that Gentiles — non-Israelites — are not expected to keep it.

This idea comes not from Scripture, but from tradition. When we test this view against the Word of God, we find a very different message.

Let's examine a few of the more common misconceptions.

Misconception #1: *"The Torah was given only to Israel at Mount Sinai."*

It's true that the Torah was formally written down at Mount Sinai. But it did not begin there.

Before there was a nation called Israel, there were righteous men who already walked in obedience to God's instructions — men like Noah, Abraham, and Joseph. For example:

- Noah distinguished between clean and unclean animals (Genesis 7:2).
- God established the Sabbath at the beginning of creation (Genesis 2:3).
- Abraham obeyed God's voice and kept his commandments, statutes, and laws, Torah (Genesis 26:5).

This proves that many of God's instructions, including things like the Sabbath and the distinctions between clean and unclean, existed long before Sinai. Long before God had Moses write down the Torah at Mount Sinai, many of his instructions were already known and followed by people like Noah and Abraham.

Misconception #2: "Gentiles were never meant to keep the Torah."

Scripture actually says the opposite. For example, the stranger—that is, a non-Israelite—who joins God's people and worships the God of Israel, is commanded to keep the Sabbath (Exodus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:14), as well as the biblical festivals like Passover (Numbers 9:14), Pentecost (Deuteronomy 16:10-11), the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29), and Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 16:13-14).

Speaking of the Feast of Tabernacles, when the Torah is read to the community during this feast, the stranger, along with the native Israelite, is admonished to hear and observe "all the words" of the Torah (Deuteronomy 31:12).

Deuteronomy 31:12

> Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, **and the sojourner** within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, **and be careful to do all the words of this law**,

Throughout the TANAKH, or Old Testament, there are many examples of strangers joining themselves to Israel and keeping God's commandments. Ruth, a Moabite, is one example. Rahab, from Jericho, is another.

Misconception #3: "*Yeshua came to replace the Torah."*

Let's consider what Yeshua actually taught.

Matthew 5:17

> Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

He affirmed the Torah, and taught his followers to do the same (Matthew 5:19). He never once said the

Torah was only for Jews. In fact, at the end of Matthew, he tells his disciples to teach the nations—the Gentiles—all that he commanded (Matthew 28:19-20), which would include his teaching that his followers should obey the Torah.

Paul also wrote that those from the nations who follow Messiah are grafted into Israel (Romans 11:17–24) and are brought near to the commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11–13). That means they are not part of some new or separate group. They are joined to the same covenant people and called to walk in the same way — by the Torah.

Why This Matters

Many sincere believers today have been taught that the Torah is irrelevant — or worse, a burden. But Scripture paints a different picture.

The Torah:

- **Was affirmed by the Messiah—**it was to be taught to the nations
- **Was given to all who would follow YHWH** — both the native-born and the stranger.
- **Will be upheld in the future** — in the Messianic Kingdom, all nations will come to learn God's ways and walk in his Torah.

Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2

> For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD [YHWH] from Jerusalem.

Yeshua himself will rule the nations with the Torah as his standard. If we are to be part of his Kingdom, shouldn't we start living by its ways now? If you are still unsure how to answer that, let's explore some of these misconceptions in more depth.

<u>The Torah Before Sinai: Was It Already in Effect?</u>

Many today have been taught that the Torah began at Mount Sinai and only applied to Israel. But is that what the Bible teaches? *Let's test that.*

Did God's instructions his Torah—really start with Moses?

Or does the evidence in Scripture show that many of his commandments were already known, understood, and practiced long before Israel ever arrived at Mount Sinai?

Let's go back to the beginning.

It is commonly assumed that before Moses, there was no Torah—no commandments, and no righteous standard. But that idea does not hold up under scrutiny.

The truth is that many instructions contained in the Torah were known and practiced before they were written down at Mount Sinai. As we already mentioned, righteous men like Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph all lived according to God's instructions, even though the Torah proper had not yet been formally codified at Mount Sinai.

And if the Torah existed, in some sense, before Israel was a nation, then it wasn't just for national Israel. God gave instructions—Torah—to all who followed him, long before Mount Sinai.
Let's now examine specific examples from Scripture. We will see that many instructions written down at Sinai were already known, understood, and obeyed by God's people long before that event.

1. The Sabbath Was Established at Creation

Genesis 2:3

> So God blessed the **seventh day** and **made it holy**, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

The seventh day was set apart from the very beginning as a model of rest and blessing. While Genesis 2:3 does not explicitly command man to rest, it establishes a creation pattern that later becomes codified at Sinai, showing continuity in YHWH's design.

Yeshua affirms this in the New Testament:

Mark 2:27

> The **Sabbath was made for man**, not man for the Sabbath.

He did not say it was made for Israel. Israel did not even exist in the beginning. It was made for man—that is, for all humanity.

The Sabbath is not an Israelite invention. It was set apart by YHWH following creation.

2. Clean and Unclean Animals Were Already Known

When God instructed Noah to gather animals into the ark, he told him to make a distinction between the clean and unclean animals.

Genesis 7:2

> Take with you seven pairs of all **clean** animals... and a pair of the animals that are **not clean**.

Noah had to know which animals were clean and which were not. This is the same distinction later explained in Leviticus.

So, if clean and unclean distinctions didn't exist until Sinai, how did Noah already know them?

3. Dietary Laws and Justice Were Already in Place

God gave Noah instructions that later echo in Torah commands:

- Do not eat blood (Genesis 9:4)
- Death penalty for murder (Genesis 9:6)

These weren't given only to Israel. They were given to Noah and his descendants—all humanity.

4. Torah Commandments Were Already Enforced

Many specific Torah commands are demonstrated before they were formally written:

- Genesis 9:22-25 – After Ham's offense against his father, Noah pronounced a curse on Canaan (see Leviticus 18:7).
- Genesis 18:20-21 – Sodom is judged for grave sin.
- Genesis 20:3 – Abimelech is warned about adultery.
- Genesis 26:5 – Abraham obeyed God's Torah.
- Genesis 39:7-9 – Joseph refuses adultery.
- Genesis 24:2-3 – Abraham avoids marrying Isaac to Canaanite idolaters.
- Genesis 35:2 – Jacob purges idols from his household.
- Genesis 38:6-8 – Judah follows levirate marriage, found later in Deuteronomy 25.
- Genesis 4:8-10 – Cain is punished for murder.

In all of these cases, sins were judged based on an already-existing standard of right and wrong. That standard is God's Torah.

5. Circumcision Preceded the Sinai Covenant

Genesis 17:10

> This is my covenant... Every male among you shall be circumcised.

Circumcision was given to Abraham long before there was a nation called Israel. And Abraham was not Jewish—he was a Hebrew who crossed over from Ur. This proves that God's covenant instructions were already in motion before Israel even existed.

There Has Always Been a Standard By Which the World Is Judged.

From the very beginning, God has had laws, and humans have been judged for violating those laws. God said not to eat from the tree of knowledge, and when Adam and Eve violated that law, they were judged by being exiled from the garden. Similarly, the whole earth was judged with a flood due to their wickedness (Genesis 6). Sodom was judged with destruction because of their wickedness (Genesis 19). But how could God judge people if there is no standard or law by which to judge them? Since sin is transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), and since people before Sinai were judged for their sins, God's law must have existed, in some sense, before Sinai.

Conclusion: The Torah Was Always There

- We have evidence that much of the Torah existed before Mount Sinai.
- Mount Sinai was simply the moment when the Torah proper was officially written down and given to a covenant people.
- But long before that, much of the Torah was already understood, practiced, and expected.
- From Adam to Noah, from Abraham to Joseph—those who walked in righteousness did so according to God's Torah.

So if we truly want to walk in the footsteps of the righteous and follow Yeshua, we must recognize the

Torah as God's standard—for Israel, yes—but also for all who join themselves to the God of Israel.

The Covenant Was Always Open to the Nations

One of the most enduring misunderstandings in modern theology is the idea that the Torah was given exclusively to Israel and never intended for Gentiles. However, when we test that teaching against Scripture, we find something very different.

From the very beginning, YHWH made it clear that his covenant was not based on ethnicity—it was based on faithfulness and obedience. God never excluded anyone from his people or his Torah. There has always been one law, one covenant, and one people, for all who desire to follow him.

Let's explore what the Scriptures actually teach.

A. The Mixed Multitude at Mount Sinai

We often think of the Exodus as an event that involved only the descendants of Jacob. But the Bible tells us otherwise.

Exodus 12:38

> A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds.

It wasn't just the Israelites who left Egypt—many non-Israelites came with them. These foreigners saw the mighty hand of YHWH and chose to align themselves with him and his people.

And what's more, they were not treated as outsiders.

They stood at Mount Sinai with Israel. They heard the same commandments. They entered into the same covenant. There was not one Torah for Israel and another for the mixed multitude. There was one Torah for all. For instance, when it comes to eating the Passover, there is one law for the native and for the stranger. Anyone who eats of the Passover sacrifice must be circumcised:

Exodus 12:49

> There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.

This verse is not vague or symbolic. It is a command. All who would eat the Passover sacrifice are held to the same standard, whether native Israelite or stranger.

YHWH repeats this point many times to make it clear. For instance, both the native Israelite and the sojourner are held to the same standard of justice and compensation for loss.

Leviticus 24:22

> You shall have the same rule for the sojourner and for the native, for I am the LORD [YHWH] your God.

Again, when it comes to Passover, the same law applies.

Numbers 9:14

> If a stranger sojourns among you and would keep the Passover to the LORD [YHWH], according

> to the statute of the Passover and according to its rule, so shall he do. You shall have one statute, both for the sojourner and for the native.

There is no "Jewish Torah" and "Gentile Torah." There is just Torah.

B. Foreigners Were Always Expected to Keep the Torah

Many today believe that Gentiles were never expected to keep God's commandments. But that's not what Scripture says.

Isaiah 56:6–7

> And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD [YHWH], to minister to him, to love the name of YHWH, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer.

This is not speaking of Israelites. It is speaking of foreigners. Gentiles. And what does God require of them?

They must:

- Keep the Sabbath
- Love the name of YHWH
- Be his servants
- Hold fast to his covenant

These are Torah principles. And God promises to receive them with joy into his presence.

Isaiah 56:8

> The LORD [YHWH] God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, 'I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.'

This is a prophecy of the Messianic Kingdom, when the nations will stream to Zion (Isaiah 2:2-3) and walk in YHWH's instructions.

One Law for All People

We even see that strangers were held to the same standard concerning offerings. He was not to be excluded from giving an offering to YHWH.

Numbers 15:15–16

> For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you, a statute forever throughout your generations. You and the sojourner shall be alike before YHWH. One law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you.

Not only is there one law, but it is a statute forever. This was not a temporary provision. This was not a cultural accommodation. This was the design from the beginning.

Everyone—native-born Israelite or Gentile convert—is held to the same divine standard.

Ruth: A Gentile Who Became Israel

The story of Ruth is one of the clearest examples of this truth in action.

Ruth was a Moabite. A Gentile. And yet she chose to follow Naomi, her Israelite mother-in-law, back to the land of Israel.

Ruth 1:16

> But Ruth said, 'Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.'

Ruth joined herself to the people of Israel.

She entered the covenant. She kept the Torah. She became one with the people of God.

And how did God respond?

He included her in the lineage of King David. And ultimately, in the genealogy of Yeshua the Messiah (Matthew 1:5).

This is a pattern. It shows us that anyone—regardless of ancestry—can be grafted into Israel through faith and obedience.

The Torah was never limited to the descendants of Jacob. From the very beginning:

- A mixed multitude stood at Sinai and received the covenant.
- YHWH declared that one law applies to both native and foreigner.
- The prophets foretold that foreigners would be gathered in and accepted if they serve and obey him.

The story of Ruth shows that faith and obedience, not bloodline, determine who belongs to God's people.

If we follow YHWH—if we love him, serve him, and walk in his commandments—then we are his people.

Ephesians 4:4–6

> There is one body and one Spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

The Torah is the righteous instruction of the Creator for all who are called by his name.

In the next section, we'll continue exploring how Israel itself is not limited to one ethnic group, but includes all twelve tribes—many of whom were scattered into the nations. This will further confirm that the Torah is not for a single ethnicity, but for all who are part of YHWH's covenant people.

Grafted In and Returning to Torah

Romans 11:17–18

> If some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others... do not be arrogant... remember, it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.

Gentile believers are not creating a new olive tree. They are being grafted into Israel.

And once grafted in, they are expected to live as part of Israel—according to the Torah.

This is why Isaiah prophesies:

Isaiah 2:2–3

> Many peoples shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD [YHWH]... that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go the Torah, and the word of the LORD [YHWH] from Jerusalem."

In the last days, the nations return—not to new laws or new ways—but will come to follow the Torah

Zechariah 8:23

> In those days **ten** men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe **[tzitzit] of a Jew**, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'

The tzitzit are a physical reminder of obedience to the Torah, as commanded in Numbers 15:38–40. The picture here is that the nations will recognize the value of the Torah. They will grab hold of the tzitzit of a Jew—in this case, a particular Jew, Yeshua the Messiah. And they will begin to follow the commandments.

And again:

Jeremiah 16:19

> Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies...

The nations will wake up, confess the lies they've inherited, and seek YHWH's truth. That truth is found in his Torah.

As we move forward, we'll explore how Yeshua and Paul upheld the Torah for all believers—and how it will be the standard for all nations in the coming Messianic Kingdom.

Section 5: The Torah Will Be the Law in the Messianic Kingdom

Many believers today have been told that the Torah is no longer relevant—that it was abolished. But Scripture paints a very different picture.

In the age to come, when Yeshua returns to rule from Jerusalem, the Torah will not be set aside—it will be the law of the land for all nations.

Let's see what the Word says.

A. All Nations Will Keep the Sabbath

One of the clearest prophecies about the Kingdom to come is that all nations will keep the Sabbath.

Isaiah 66:23 (see also Ezekiel 46:1-3)

> From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, declares the LORD [YHWH].

This is a future, literal event—after Yeshua's return and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth (Isaiah 66:22).

Notice that it doesn't say "Israel" will come before him. It says "all flesh."

The only reasonable and logical conclusion from Isaiah 66:23 is that the Sabbath remains set apart. It is still intentionally set apart from the other days of the week, even in the 1,000-year reign. *So why is that important?*

YHWH sanctified the Sabbath at creation by resting on it (**Genesis 2:2–3**), and Scripture defines that rest as what makes the day holy (**Exodus 20:11**). Since Isaiah declares that "all flesh" will come to worship before YHWH "from Sabbath to Sabbath" in the new heavens and new earth, it confirms that the Sabbath is still set apart. Future observance by all flesh is only meaningful if the Sabbath has remained sanctified by YHWH's own standard.

This aligns perfectly with Yeshua's own words:

Mark 2:27

> The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

The Sabbath is not a Jewish invention. It was established at creation, not Sinai. It was designed as a gift and sign for all mankind.

If the Sabbath will be required of all nations in the Kingdom, then clearly it was never just for Israel.

B. The Torah Will Go Forth from Zion

Not only will the nations keep the Sabbath—they will also learn and follow the Torah.

Micah 4:2

> Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHWH... that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of YHWH from Jerusalem.

This is a future prophecy. And it tells us exactly what Yeshua will teach the nations when he reigns: Torah.

If the Torah had been abolished, why would it be taught to the nations in the Messianic Kingdom?

The answer is simple: the Torah was never abolished. It is God's standard for righteousness. It is the law that will govern the world to come.

C. Obedience Is the Evidence of True Faith

Some might argue, "*But we're saved by faith, not by works*." And that is absolutely true.

Ephesians 2:8–9

> For by grace you have been saved through faith... not a result of works...

But salvation is only the beginning. Scripture is clear—obedience to YHWH's commandments is the fruit of true faith.

Romans 3:31

> Do we then overthrow the Torah by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the Torah.

1 John 5:3

> For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Obedience is not how we earn salvation—it's how we show love to our Creator.

D. In the End, Torah-Keepers Are Blessed

Revelation—the final book in the Bible—agrees:

Revelation 22:14 (NKJV)

> Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city.

Obedience does not save us—but those who are saved walk in obedience.

In the New Jerusalem, it is those who keep God's commandments who are blessed.

Let's summarize:

- The Sabbath will be kept by all flesh in the Kingdom (Isaiah 66:23).
- The Torah will be taught to all nations from Jerusalem (Micah 4:2).
- Obedience is the fruit of faith and love for YHWH (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3).
- Those who keep his commandments will be blessed and enter the Kingdom (Revelation 22:14).

The Torah was not abolished. It was not replaced. And it was never just for Israel.

It is the enduring instruction of the God of all creation—for all who love and follow him.

Ecclesiastes 12:13

> Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

The return of Yeshua will not bring a new law—it will restore the one he gave from the beginning.

Let's not wait for the Kingdom to begin obeying.

Let's choose today to walk in the way of life.

We hope that you have been blessed by this teaching, and remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom.

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