

## I. FROM THE READING

(Quotes from Thomas Lancaster's *Restoration* Chapters 3-7)

### Chapter 3: What is the Torah?

#### A. Torah Meanings

29-Paul wrote in Greek, but the concepts he was communicating were Hebrew.

-Torah comes from a Hebrew root word (*yarah*) that is used as an archery term meaning "to take aim, to shoot," such as shooting an arrow in order to hit a target. The essence of the word then is "to hit the mark."

-The opposite of *torah* is *chata*, which means "to miss the mark." *Chata* is the word translated as "sin" in our Bibles. Paul tells us that all have sinned and fallen short of the mark. (Romans 3:23).

30-Sin, properly defined, is transgression of Torah. We all miss the target. We all sin.

-The bull's eye of Torah, the careful aim of Torah is the perfect Messiah.

-The Greek of Romans 10:4 is best understood to mean that the Messiah is the "goal" (not the cancellation) of the Torah.

#### B. Torah Definitions

31-Torah in many contexts means instruction and teaching. Torah is the impartation of God's direction, instruction, teaching and guidance. It is like God's instruction manual for life.

-When we speak of the Law (or Torah), we immediately think in terms of [the first five books] of Moses. But Torah is not limited to the five books of Moses.

-Therefore, when the rabbis spoke of the Torah, they generally included all of the Scriptures in the term.

32-That is why Paul sometimes said, "It is written in the Law," and then quoted from Psalms. (1 Cor 14:21). (Yeshua too in John 10:34:15:25)

-For believers in Yeshua, the Torah is broader yet (including the entire Bible).

-In classical Judaism, even the rabbis' extended teaching came to be termed "Torah."

-For the purpose of this book, when I speak of the Torah, I am speaking of the formal Torah in its narrowest sense—the five books of Moses.

#### C. The Covenantal Torah

-The Torah is covenantal. A covenant is a contract specifying terms and conditions incumbent upon both parties. It is a list of obligations. But more than a simple agreement, a covenant is the defining of a relationship between two parties. Technically, Torah is not one single covenant. It contains several different covenants (Eph 2:12).

33-In 2 Corinthians 3:14 Paul referred to the Torah of Moses as the old covenant so long as it was read without the realization of Messiah. He said that once we are in Messiah, the veil is "removed." The Torah remains, but the veil concealing Messiah within it is removed.

-Similarly, the book of Hebrews quotes the prophet Jeremiah to prove that in the new covenant, the Torah is written upon our hearts (Hebrews 8:10 quoting Jeremiah 31:33).

-It is not quite correct to equate the Torah and the old covenant because there is Torah in the new covenant too.

-According to Jeremiah, Paul and the writer of Hebrews, the newness or oldness of the covenant depends on where one stands in regard to Messiah.

-Old Covenant: The attempt to keep the Torah according to the covenant at Sinai without realization of Messiah, resulting in condemnation.

- New Covenant: The writing of the Torah on our hearts through the realization of Messiah according to the covenant in Jeremiah 31, resulting in salvation.
- The Torah is like a marriage covenant between God and Israel. Their romance actually began while Israel was still in Egypt. There the Lord declared to Israel, “I will take you for My people, and I will be your God” (Ex 6:7). This expression is close to an ancient legal formulation from the sphere of marriage.
- 34-The giving of the law at Mount Sinai is described in Jewish literature as a betrothal and a wedding.
- The rabbis compared the Torah to a *ketubah*. Where God is likened unto the groom, Israel is likened unto the bride and the Torah is likened unto the *ketubah* that spells out the terms and conditions of their marriage. The Ten Commandments form the summary of their marital statement.
- The Torah was not given as a means to attain salvation.
- When God gave Israel the Torah at Mount Sinai, they were already a redeemed people.
- 35-Redemption must precede commandments.
- Oftentimes, believers avoid Torah because they are afraid of falling into legalism.
- Legalism says, “I must obey God in order to be saved.” Grace says, I must obey because I am saved.”

#### **Chapter 4: Summing Up the Torah**

##### **A. Love is the Foundation of the Torah**

- 38-Rabbi Hillel said, “What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Torah. The rest is the commentary on it. Now go and study the rest.”
- The Torah is like the builder’s cubit rod.
- 39-Whenever we compare ourselves to God’s righteous standard, we will experience the same bruising.
- The guiding principal of Torah, the heart and center of Torah, and very true extension of Torah is LOVE.
- 40-Love is not the replacement of the Torah; it is the summary of the Torah.
- If I set out to keep a particular commandment but find myself arguing, insulting and embittering others over it, then I may have kept the commandment, but I have failed to keep God’s Torah, because the essence of it is love—love of God and love of neighbor.
- 41-The opposite of love is not hatred; it is selfishness—love of self.
- We must protect the biblical concept of love from being so generalized that it loses all meaning. Love is to be the preeminent virtue practiced by believers. The Torah is summed up in love; not by rendering all other requirements inconsequential, but in that love is fundamental to all of the torah’s other requirements and ultimately leads to the observance of all the others.

##### **B. Torah Justice**

- 43-In most cases, the legal loophole they used was the disqualification of the witnesses. The Torah says that every allegation must be established by two eyewitnesses. (Deut 17:6).
- Without reliable eyewitnesses, God’s Word did not allow a trial or punishment to take place.
- 44-Yeshua employed a similar approach. Rather than try to defend the woman (who really was guilty) or bend the law (which does not bend), He disqualified the witnesses.
- According to the Torah, only qualified eyewitnesses could cast the first stones. Each man present was supernaturally conscience stricken.
- Through a legal technicality, He freed her from the punishment of the Torah. The important thing to realize, though, is that He did it within the boundaries of the Torah.
- He used the Torah to save her and then placed the Torah of His love before her as a pathway to turn her life to the Father. “From now on sin no more.”

- 45-By satisfying the demands of the Torah with His own righteous life and innocent death, He sets us free from condemnation.
- The love that brought the incarnation, the crucifixion and the resurrection is the same love that gave the Torah.

## **Chapter 5: Torah and the New Testament**

### **A. Yeshua in the Synagogue**

- 47-Luke 4 is the oldest existing description of a Jewish synagogue service, and the details there are sparse.
- Even in modern synagogues, the reader called up to read from the prophets must first read the last few verses of that week's Torah portion. That Yeshua goes on to read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah indicates that Yeshua was the last reader called to read the Torah that Sabbath.
- 48-The synagogue official called seven readers to read the Torah on the Sabbath.
- As the guest of honor that Sabbath, Yeshua was not called to read until six readers had stood to read before Him. The place of the seventh reader is a special honor because the seventh reader also does the reading from the prophets.
- After completing the reading, he rolled the scroll of Isaiah back up and sat down. This does not mean that he returned to His seat in the congregation, but that He sat down to teach.

### **B. The Torah's Relevance & Authority**

- 49-The Bible itself refers to neither the Hebrew Scriptures (the ones we call 'old') nor the Apostolic Scriptures (the ones we call 'new') as old or new. Those are titles that man has created.
- 50-Could Paul really have expected believers to be taught, rebuked, corrected, trained and equipped for good works from the Old Testament? Apparently so.
- How odd for us to imagine that those Scriptures are not relevant to believers today.
- 52-Our priority of Scripture has the Epistles first and the Torah last.
- The correct priority of Scripture is sequential.
- The Torah can be likened to the foundation of a house because it is the initial revelation of God.

## **Chapter 6: The Giving of the Torah**

### **A. God's Revelation to Mankind**

- 57-Before the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, we human beings had precious little hope of knowing who God was, what He was like, what He was about or what He wanted.
- 58-Most of the world's major religions trace their faith back to the spiritual endowment of a single individual. Premises of theology, faith and creed are often built upon the subjective experiences of a single person. Not so with Torah. The Torah was given to an entire nation.
- 59-The presence of Natural Law in human society is the result of being made in the image of God. We possess a moral conscience.
- 60-The gods of the ancient world were hardly in a position to issue moral imperatives. They were as sinful and petty as we are because they were, at best, merely projections of our own selves.
- 61-The law commanding us to assist our enemy when he is in difficulty reveals to us a piece of true godliness. Such a law teaches us about God's mercy and compassion.
- 62-When one realizes that Torah is God's self-disclosure to the world, one must also recognize the enormous gravity of declaring parts of that same Torah null and void.
- 63-This is why Messiah is necessary. In Messiah, the perfect revelation of godliness is fully realized. Living in complete accordance with God's Law, Messiah is a tangible and intimately knowable representation of the unknowable God. He is the Torah lived out.

## **B. Torah Written On Our Hearts**

- When God's Torah is written on our hearts, there will be no disparity between the Natural Law of humanity and God's revealed Torah. Instead of vague and subjective notions of wrong and right, the Torah of God will be the natural impulse of human morality. In that day, human beings will be accurate reflections of godliness.
- Because we are part of the new covenant and because we have received the Holy Spirit of God within us, we assume that we must already have God's perfect law placed in our minds and written on our hearts. But is God's Torah really fully written on our hearts?
- 64-Redemption is a process. The Torah is being written on our hearts, but none of us have arrived yet. For this reason, we are still very much in need of Yeshua.
- The Spirit will never lead us to break Torah. On the contrary, the Spirit of God is writing Torah onto the hearts of men. As we follow Yeshua and listen to the Spirit of God within us, we are being transformed into living Torahs, living revelations of godliness.

## **Chapter 7: The Inner Torah**

### **A. The Torah Mirror**

- 67-Yeshua's little brother, tells us that we do have such a mirror. It is the Torah (James 1:22-25).
- 68-Seeing Yeshua in the mirror reminds us that we need to be true to this inner identity.
- When we look into the Torah, we look into the righteousness of God. It shows us things with which we must deal, commandments to keep, dangers to avoid, and areas in our lives that need to be set right.
- 69-For believers, the Torah is not a sterile list of rules. It is a written version of our inner identity—Messiah.
- To the extent that we live out the commands of Torah in our lives, we are living out the righteousness of Messiah. We can pick any commandment from the Torah to see this principle practically applied.

### **B. The Indwelling Holy Spirit**

- 71-There are also aspects of this new identity that are more mystical than legal. As believers, we are given a portion of God's Holy Spirit to dwell within us. We actually become temples of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit that dwells within us is the same Spirit that dwelled within and anointed Yeshua. Therefore, we say it is the Spirit of Yeshua that dwells within us. (Col 1:27; Eph 3:17; 2 Cor 13:5)
- Our new creation identity is premised on the notion that the Messiah now dwells within us, is being formed within us, and lives through us. This raises a very important implication. There is a Torah-observant, Jewish guy dwelling within you!
- 73-Yeshua is not the same as the written Torah of Moses. But He is of the same essence as the Torah...He is the Living Torah in that He emanates from the same source as the written Torah; that is, God's divine Word.
- The written Torah and the Living Torah are meant to work hand in hand. They work in concert to reveal the Word of God through us.

## **II. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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