

Studying Torah

By: Eric Smalley

When you hear the word "Torah", what comes to mind? For me, I had always thought it meant "Law". This is where a lot of people get things mixed up with these two words. The definition for "Law" is, "a rule of conduct or action established by custom or laid down and enforced by a governing authority". Now, look at the definition for the word, "Torah", "teaching, instruction". See the difference? YHWH never gave us a "Law" to abide by. Instead, He gave us His Torah or instruction. According to the definition of "Law", it is something that is "enforced". But instructions are done by choice.

When we think about "God's Law", we feel like if we don't keep His "Law" we will be harshly punished. The word "Law" sets fear in our lives of a Judging God. This should not be! Because if it were true, He would ^{not} have spared Adam and Eve, Cain, or even the righteous man, Noah and his family. Because of the Fall of Man in Eden, sin entered into our world. Now, YHWH has to establish, not Law, but instructions and teachings (His Torah). He has to teach and instruct us to follow His instructions so we live a prosperous life.

So now, the question: "Why did He give us this Torah?" The answer is simple: Because He wants a loving, Fatherly relationship with His creation (which is us). YHWH created us for this very purpose. But, because of The Fall, that relationship was broken. YHWH gave Adam and Eve instructions to follow: 1) Take care of the garden; 2) Be fruitful and multiply and 3) DO NOT EAT of the TREE of Knowledge of Good and Evil. That one instruction ~~they~~ ^{they} had fallen short of. They did not follow YHWH's teachings. YHWH was their Father and they disobeyed Him. Notice I said "Father" and not "Judge". As their Father, He still punished them, but out of love instead of malice. Could YHWH have wiped out them both out? Of course!

But that's not what a loving Father does. He gives us a chance to redeem ourselves. Even in punishment, he still gives us that opportunity. So, even when you do wrong, YHWH still loves you. It's unconditional!

While I'm in jail, I'm studying both Law and Torah? "How?" you may ask. With studying Law, I'm actually learning the legal system and the different types. Once I get someone to sponsor me financially, I plan on studying to be a paralegal so I can eventually become a lawyer. While doing this, I am also studying Torah. I want to grow spiritually with my Heavenly Father and being obedient to His teachings and instructions. My Heavenly Father has punished me, but He is lovingly guiding me back to Him by His Son, Yehushua. Because of what His Son did at Calvary, I can be fully restored to His undying love. And you can be, too!

I hope you learned now the difference between "Law" and "Torah" and a "loving Father" and a "judge". Because now, I just want to encourage you to study YHWH's Torah. They are instructions and teachings on how to live a set-apart life and live it for Him. May YHWH Elohim bless you in every stage in your life. Shalom!