

THE DAVAR BIBLE SCHOOL

Bible

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

LESSON 2

An Open Letter from the Dean

Greetings and welcome to our growing family of Davar Bible School correspondence course students. This is a totally new and different kind of Bible study course. This informative course of study will help you understand the clear, simple, plain truths of your Bible. The only textbook you will need for this correspondence course is your Bible. You will find these studies fresh and interesting, not dull and dry. You will be richly rewarded with enlightening new truth in each lesson. There is no tuition or cost to you whatsoever, this course is absolutely free of charge. Your enrollment has already been paid by the voluntary freewill tithes and offerings of those who have elected to support this teaching. Those who wish to support this work are gladly welcomed as coworkers in this important effort to proclaim truth to all people. As you read each lesson, make sure you look up each Scripture that is cited. A separate test booklet is provided for each lesson. This way you can keep the lessons for further study, returning only your test booklet to be graded by your teacher. (Alternatively you may just email your answers to us.) It is our prayer that Elohim will bless you as you seek to understand His word.

- James Trimm

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LESSON 2

In the last lesson we learned that the Torah is Truth (Ps. 119:142) and that Yeshua said:

... if you continue in my word,
then are you my disciples indeed.
And you shall know the truth,
and the truth shall make you free.
(John 8:31-32)

Therefore the Torah brings freedom. This is completely contrary to what most people have been taught. The common wisdom is that the Torah is bondage and that "freedom in Christ" means freedom from Torah. For example one author writes:

Many Christians today would return to Sinai.
They would put upon the church the yoke of
bondage, the Law of Moses.
(God's Plan of the Ages; Louis T. Tallbot; 1970; p. 66)

However as we shall see the scriptures teach that exactly the opposite is true.

The central story of Judaism is that of the Exodus from Egypt. The children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt. God promised to bring them out of bondage and give them freedom. Upon leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, YHWH led them to Mt. Sinai where he delivered the Torah to them. Note that the theme of this central story is that God promised freedom from bondage and gave the children of Israel Torah. Now why would YHWH lead the people out of bondage in Egypt, lead them to Mt. Sinai, and deliver them right back into bondage again? And why would he at the same time promise them freedom. God is no liar. He promised the people freedom and he gave them Torah because the Torah is freedom from bondage. The Torah is truth (Ps. 119:142) and the truth will make you free (John 8:31-32).

This truth is proclaimed by the Psalmist:

So shall I keep your **Torah** continually forever and ever,
And I will walk in **freedom**: for I seek your precepts.
(Psalm 119:44-45)

As well as by Ya'akov HaTzadik (James the Just) who called the Torah "the Torah of **freedom**" (James 1:25; 2:12).

However the *ANOMOS* teachers today teach that the Torah is bondage and that Torah-lessness is freedom. They have exchanged the truth (Torah) of God for a lie (Torah-lessness) (Rom. 1:25). Of these 2Peter 2:19 states:

While they promise them freedom,

they themselves are servants of corruption:
for of whom a man is overcome,
of the same is he brought into bondage.

according to Kefa these men "turn from the holy commandment delivered to them"
(2Peter 2:21) they promise freedom but deliver bondage.

By contrast Yeshua said:

Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden,
and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you,
and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in
heart; **and you shall find rest for your souls.**
For my yoke is easy, and my load is light.
(Mat. 11:28-30)

Now many of the teachers of Torah-lessness use this this passage as a proof text. To them this passage refers to freedom from the bondage of Torah. However notice the boldfaced portion. This boldfaced portion of Yeshua's statement is a quotation from the Tanak. A quotation which gives a great deal of context to Yeshua's statement. Lets look at this Tanak passage:

Thus said YHWH, stand you in the ways, and see,
and ask for the old paths, where is the good way,
and walk therein, **and you shall find rest for
your souls.** But they said, we will not walk therein.
(Jer. 6:16)

Notice that this "way" which gives "rest" is "the old path". Now lets read a little further down in Jer. 6 to obtain more context:

But they said, we will not walk therein (Jer. 6:16)...
...they have not hearkened unto my words,
nor to my Torah, but rejected it.
(Jer. 6:19)

Notice that the "old path" that brings "rest for your souls" to which they said "we will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:16) is identified by YHWH as "my Torah". This takes us up a bit further in the text of Jeremiah:

...they are foolish, for they do not know
the way of YHWH, the requirements of
their God. So I will go to the leaders and
speak to them; surely they know the way
of YHWH, the requirements of their God."
But with one accord they too had broken

off the yoke and torn off the bonds.
(Jer. 5:4-5 see also Jer. 2:20)

Here we find that the "yoke" which brings rest is the yoke which was being rejected. The yoke of Torah. Now lets look again at Yeshua's saying:

Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden,
and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you,
and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in
heart; **and you shall find rest for your souls.**
For my yoke is easy, and my load is light.
(Mat. 11:28-30)

The yoke that Messiah asks us to take on ourselves, the yoke that will give us rest for our souls is the Torah. The Torah is freedom from the bondage of Torah-lessness. The freedom of Torah is freedom from the bondage to sin that results without Torah. Without Torah there is no true freedom, only bondage. True liberty does not include a license to sin (Rom. 3:8; 6:1-2, 15)

As we said in Lesson 1 there is a spiritual battle taking place between light and darkness. Paul writes:

...what communion has light with darkness?
And what concord has Messiah with Belial...
(2Cor. 6:14b-15a)

Throughout the New Testament there are extended metaphores revolving around light and darkness. Believers are called "sons of light" (Lk. 16:8; Jn. 12:36; Eph. 5:8; 1Thes. 5:5). The full armour of God is also called the "armour of light" (Rom. 13:12). The New Testament speaks of those "who walk in darkness" (Jn. 8:12; 12:35).

But what does this idiomatic use of the terms light and darkness mean? For the answer let us turn to the Tanak:

For the *commandment is a lamp*;
and the *Torah is light*...
(Prov. 6:23)

Your word is a *lamp* to my feet,
and a *light* to my path.
(Psalm 119:105)

To the *Torah* and to the testimony;
if they speak not according to this word,
it is because there is no *light* in them.
(Isaiah 8:20)

...for a **Torah** shall proceed from me,
and I will make my judgement to rest
for **a light** of the people.
(Isaiah 51:4)

So according to the Tanak the Torah is a light for our paths. Those that walk in the Torah walk in the light. This is why the New Testament speaks of those who walk in darkness (Jn. 8:12; 12:35; 1Jn. 1:6; 2:11). These are those who do not walk by the light of Torah. Of these John writes:

And if we say that we have fellowship with him,
and walk in darkness,
we are liars and we do not walk in truth.
(1Jn. 1:6)

Notice that John equates "walking in truth" with walking in the light. As we noted previously "the Torah is truth" (Ps. 119:142) thus if "walking in the light" means "walking in truth" then both phrases refer to walking in the Torah. This takes us back to our passages from the Tanak given above. John also confirms this by writing the parallel statements:

...walking in truth.
...walk according to his commandments.
(2Jn. 1:4, 6)

Now lets look back at a moment to the full armour of God. As we have noted Paul also calls this armour the "armour of light" (Rom. 13:12). According to Paul we are involved in a spiritual battle with "the rulers of the darkness of this world." (Eph. 6:12) and thus he instructs us to put on this "armour of light" (Eph. 6:13 & Rom. 13:12)

Now several of the items of the "armour of light" also tie in with the Torah:

- **The Belt of Truth**

Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
and your **Torah** is **truth**.
(Psalm 119:142)

You are near, O YHWH,
and all your **commandments** are **truth**.
(Psalm 119:151)

- **The Breastplate of Righteousness**

What great nation is there that has

statutes and judgments as *righteous*
as this whole *Torah* which I am setting
before you today?...
(Deut. 4:6)

• **The Shield of Faith**

Remove the false way from me,
and graciously grant me your *Torah*.
I have chosen the way of *faith*;
I have placed your ordinances before me.
(Psalm 119:29-30)

• **The Sword of the Word**

...For the *Torah* will go out from Zion;
and the *word* of YHWH from Jerusalem.
(Isaiah 2:3)

Thus the Armour of Light is the armour of the Torah which lights our path. There are two paths before us, one of darkness and one of light. On the one hand one may "walk in darkness" on the other hand one may "walk in the light" of Torah. The "sons of light" put on the "armour of light" and walk in the light of Torah, while the "sons of darkness" walk in the Torah-lessness which is the darkness of this dark world.

Another misunderstanding common in the church today is the concept that Torah and Grace are mutually exclusive ideas. For example one author writes:

A believer can not be under law and
under grace at the same time.
(God's Plan of the Ages; Louis T. Talbot; 1970; p. 83)

Now let us be noble Bereans to see if this is true. Let us ask ourselves: "How were people saved in 'Old Testament' times? Were they saved by works or by grace?"

The fact is that often when Paul speaks of how we are saved by grace through faith he often cites the Tanak to prove his point. Two of his favorite proof texts for this concept are from the Tanak:

And he believed in YHWH;
and he counted it to him as righteousness.
(Gen. 15:6 = Rom. 4:3, 22; Gal. 3:6)

...the just shall live by his faith.
(Hab. 2:4 = Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11)

So Paul is arguing from the Tanak that one is saved by faith alone apart from works. In fact the real truth is that men of the "Old Testament" times were just as under grace as we are today:

But Noah found *grace* in the eyes of YHWH.
(Gen. 6:8)

...you have also found *grace* in my sight....
...for you have found *grace* in my sight...
(Ex. 33:12, 17)

...and now I have found *grace* in your sight...
(Judges 6:17)

The people... found *grace* in the wilderness...
(Jer. 31:2)

Thus as noble Bereans we learn from the Tanak that people in "Old Testament" times were saved by grace through faith. They could not have earned their salvation any more than we could today, as Paul writes:

Knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law, but by the faith of Yeshua the Nessian, even we have believed in Yeshua the Messiah, that we might be justified by the faith of Messiah, and not by works of the law; and by the works of the law shall *no flesh* be saved.
(Gal. 2:16)

In fact the "New Testament" contains more commandments than the "Old Testament". The New Testament contains 1050 commandments [as delineated in Dake's Annotated Reference Bible; By Finnis Jennings Dake; N.T. pp.313-316] while the "Old Testament" Mosaic Law contains only 613 (b.Makkot 23b; see Appendix). Thus faith and grace are in the "Old Testament" and law and works can be found in the New Testament. People in Old Testament times were saved by grace through faith just like people in New Testament times. Now many anomians will agree to this fact on the surface, but let's follow this thought through to its fullest conclusion. Let's go beyond the surface and really think this through. If what we have shown to be true is true, then the people in the wilderness in the days of Moses were saved by grace through faith. Now let's look at the full impact of that statement. That means that people were under grace, and saved by faith alone and not by works, when Moses was stoning people to death for violating the Torah! Obviously then being saved by grace through faith in no way affects Torah observance.

So if grace and faith do not negate the observance of Torah, then what is the true nature of faith and grace? What is faith? What is grace? Let us once again turn to the scriptures for answers.

Now part of the reason that many people have come to think that there is more "grace" in the New Testament than in the Old Testament is a translation bias in the KJV and many other English versions.

There are two words for "grace" in the Hebrew Tanak. The first word is CHEN (Strong's 2580/2581) which means "grace or charm". The other word is CHESED (Strong's 2616/2617) which carries the meaning of "grace, mercy or undue favor."

These two words closely parallel the meanings of the two Greek words used for grace in the Greek Bible. These are CHARIS (Strong's 5485/5463) which means "grace or charm" and ELEOS (Strong's 1651/1653) meaning "grace, mercy or undue favor."

Obviously Hebrew CHEN = Greek CHARIS and Hebrew CHESED = Greek ELEOS. Now the KJV tends to translate CHEN/CHARIS as "grace" but tends to translate CHESED/ELEOS as "mercy". Now when we think of "grace" in biblical terms we are usually thinking of the concept of CHESED/ELEOS "undue favor".

Now if we follow with the KJV translation scheme then it appears that there is much more grace in the New Testament than the Tanak, since CHEN only appears 70 times in the Tanak while CHARIS appears 233 times in the New Testament. But remember, the concept of "undue favor" is actually CHESED/ELEOS. CHESED appears 251 times in the Tanak, while ELEOS appears only 50 times in the New Testament. If anything there is far more "grace" in the Tanak than in the New Testament.

Now let us turn to the Tanak to get a better understanding of what grace really is. According to the Scriptures there is a close connection between "grace" and the "fear of YHWH":

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his grace (CHESED)
toward those who fear him.
(Psalm 103:11)

Oh let those who fear YHWH say,
"His grace (CHESED) is everlasting."
(Psalm 118:4)

By grace (CHESED) and truth
iniquity is atoned for,
and by the fear of YHWH
one keeps away from evil.
(Proverbs 16:6)

And the fear of YHWH, according to the Tanak, includes Torah observance:

...that he may learn the fear of YHWH his God,
to keep all the words of this Torah
and these statutes, to do them:
(Deut. 17:19)

...that they may hear, and that they may learn,
and fear YHWH your God,
and observe to do all the words of this Torah.
(Deut. 31:12)

Therefore there is clearly no conflict between grace and Torah. In fact the Torah is closely connected to grace.

The next word we need to examine is "faith". The Hebrew word is EMUNAH. EMUNAH can mean "belief, faith or trust" and is best translated "trusting faithfulness". When we speak of "faith" in YHWH we are not merely speaking about "belief" but "trusting faithfulness".

If someone were to ask you if you are faithful to your spouse, you would not reply by saying "Yes, I believe my spouse exists." That is because it is clearly not an issue of what you believe but in whether you are faithful. Imagine a man who stays out late at night every night committing adultery with various women. Each night he comes home to his wife and tells her how much he loves her, and insists that since he believes in her existence that he therefore is faithful to her. Is this man faithful to his wife? Absolutely not! This understanding is confirmed to us in the Scriptures as follows:

Remove the false way from me,
and graciously grant me your *Torah*.
I have chosen the way of *faith*;
I have placed your ordinances before me.
(Psalm 119:29-30)

Now I want to make it clear that we are not saying that one earns ones salvation by keeping Torah. At times I have been asked "Do I have to keep Torah to be saved?". I reply by saying "Of course not.... do you have to get cleaned up to take a bath?"

You may ask, "Well if we don't keep the Torah for salvation, then why do we keep the Torah?" First of all, keeping the Torah SHOWS our faith (Titus 3:5-8; 1Jn. 2:3-7; James 2:14-26). Secondly there are rewards for keeping the Torah (Titus 3:8). The Psalms tell us that it "restores the soul" (Ps. 19:7). Yeshua promises that those who keep the Torah and teach others to do so will be called first in the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt. 5:19). Additionally, Jews who keep the Mosaic Torah are given a long list of other promises (Deut. 28).

Now if the Torah is good and everlasting then it stands to reason that it should be observed. Paul tells us that we should not use grace as an excuse to sin (Rom. 6:1-2, 15) and that the only way to know sin is through the Torah (Rom. 7:7). Yeshua tells us that if we love him we will keep his commandments (Jn. 14:15, 21, 23-25; 15:10). The fact that we are saved by faith is all the more reason that we should keep the Torah, as the Scriptures tell us:

..not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Yeshua the Messiah our Savior, that having been justified by his grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to ***maintain good works***. These things are good and profitable to men. (Titus 3:5-8)

And by this we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He who says, "I know him," and does not ***keep his commandments***, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps his word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in him ought himself to walk just as he walked. Brothers, I write ***no*** new commandment to you, but an ***old commandment*** which you have had ***from the beginning***. The ***old commandment*** is ***the word which you heard from the beginning***. (1Jn. 2:3-7)

(End Lesson Two)

