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Moshe and the Torah

20: 1-26



One of the great events in the history of **Isra'el**, and also in the history of mankind, was **God** giving **the Torah** to the children of **Isra'el** through **Moshe**. It was not given so that **the Israelites**, by keeping it, could attain righteousness (see the commentary on [Galatians Bj - The Righteous Shall Live by Faith](#)). A righteous standing before **God** has always been by faith in **God** alone (**Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3 and 22, 5:1; Galatians 2:16, 3:6 and 21**). **The Torah** functioned, and continues to function, to teach **the Israelites** about both righteousness and **their** sinfulness (**Romans 3:19-20b**). **Rabbinic tradition teaches that there are two main sections of the Torah: 248 positive commandment and 365 negative commands, which together comprise the 613 mitzvot of the Torah. 248 is said to be the number of bones in the human body and 365 represents every day of the solar year. Hence, Jews are called on to perform the mitzvot every day of their lives with all their being (Tractate Makkot 23b).**

*We do not worship **the Torah**. But when we give reverence to it, we practice the reverence that we will give to the **Messiah** when **He** comes again. In fact, **the Torah** means the teacher **and the rabbis believe that the Torah is the light of the world.***

The Torah was given by means of **angels**. There are many Jewish traditions that are passed down but are ignored in the B'rit Chadashah and therefore carry no validity. However, there are other traditions contained in Jewish writings that apparently do have weight because the B'rit Chadashah validates them. Nowhere in the TaNaKh are we told that when **Moshe** received **the Torah** he received it from **angels**. Nevertheless, the fact that **God** gave **the Torah** by means of **angels** is validated three times in the B'rit Chadashah (**Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2**).

What was the purpose of the **Torah**? Well, one thing we know for sure, it was *never* intended to be a means of salvation. Because if that were true, it would mean that salvation was by works. The clear teaching of Scripture is that salvation is *always* by grace through faith, plus nothing. However, the content of faith changed from dispensation to dispensation. And what the content of faith was in different dispensations was determined by the amount of revelation that **ADONAI** had given up to that time. Progressive revelation teaches: **God** did not choose to give all of the Scriptures at one time, but they were recorded for over sixteen hundred years by about forty different authors. The more Scripture that was given, the more revelation was given and man had greater knowledge of what it meant to be saved.

Therefore, if **the Torah** was not meant to save anyone, what was its purpose?
There were seven basic purposes.

First, it revealed the holiness of God. It revealed the standard of righteousness that **God** demanded. One would not have to read many of the **six hundred and thirteen** commandments to realize that he or she had broken quite a few of them. One would conclude that it was hopeless to be saved by works.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, We worship **You**! Please forgive us for so often we have not given **You** due reverence as **the** perfect and holy **King of all kings (Revelation 19:16)**. We need to remember that **You** are both our **Father** and **the Holy King of kings**. Praise **You** that **You** have taken as **Your** children all who love and follow **Yeshua** as **Lord (John 1:12, First John 3:1, 3)**. Praise **You** that **You** live in **Your children (Romans 8:9, 11; First Corinthians 6:19; Second Timothy 1:14)** and have given us **Your** power to conquer temptation (**First Corinthians 10:13**) so that we can follow **You** in purity (**First John 3:3**). We love **You** our wonderful and Holy **Father**. In the name of **Your** Holy **Son** and the power of **His** resurrection.
Amen*

Second, it was to provide a blueprint for living for the righteous of the TaNaKh (Romans 3:20 and 28). The way they demonstrated their faith was by striving, although never succeeding, to keep **the Torah**.

Third, it was to serve as a barrier, or a dividing wall of hostility separating Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 2:14). As long as **the Torah** was in effect, Gentiles could not enjoy the spiritual blessings of the Jewish covenants. The only way they could was: to become converts to Judaism, put themselves under total subjection to **the Torah**, submit to it by means of circumcision and in all practical purposes, live as any Jew would live. So only Gentiles as converts to Judaism, but not Gentiles as Gentiles, could enjoy those Jewish spiritual blessings.

Fourth, the Torah was to reveal sin (Romans 3:19-20, 5:20, 7:7). After reading **the Torah** no one could claim to be without **sin**. **The Torah** was like a mirror being held up to each **Israelite** to reveal his or her own **sin**.

Fifth, interestingly enough, was to make people sin more (Romans 4:15, 7:8-13). Our sin nature actually uses **the Torah** as a basis of operation because where there is no commandment there is no transgression of it. For example, as soon as **the Torah** said: **You shall not**, the sin nature says, “Oh, yes I will.” Or if **the Torah** said you will do this or that, the sin nature says, “Oh, no I won’t.” Suddenly, the **sin** nature had a base of operation, **the Torah**. Paul goes on to state that the problem was not with **the Torah** because it was holy, righteous and ordained by **God**. The problem was our sin nature. **The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Torah (First Corinthians 15:56).** Plus, those who felt they were keeping the commandments of **the Torah** judged others that they felt were not keeping the commandments.

Sixth, it was to teach the way of righteousness. The Hebrew word **Torah** is derived from the Hebrew root *yarah*, which means *to shoot an arrow or to teach*. **Torah** means teaching or instruction that is true and straight as if the words of **Torah** are shot in a direct path like an arrow, with power and force for living life to the fullest.

Seventh, and most important purpose of the Torah, was to lead Jews to faith in the Messiah. Rabbi Sha’ul stated that **the Torah was our guardian to lead us to the Messiah that we might be justified by faith** (see the commentary on [Galatians Bm - The Torah Became our Guardian to Lead Us to Messiah](#)). If we really learned the lesson of the fourth purpose, that no one



could claim to be without **sin**; and the lesson of the fifth purpose, that our **sin** nature causes us to **sin** more, that will lead to the sixth purpose, that is **to lead us to faith in the Messiah** because we would understand that it would be impossible to fulfill **His** perfect, righteous standard.