

Beginners Torah Lesson Part 4-More Dynamics of Torah Study

By Rabbi Edward Levi Nydle-Revised 9-5-03

“And this is the parable: The SEED is the Word of Elohim” Luke 8:11

This is part four in the series of Torah lessons for Beginners. The purpose of these lessons is to aid the beginning student of the Word with the Hebraic principles of Torah study so that the student does not find himself misinterpreting the Torah and holding onto the false doctrines of Christianity or the Reformed Protestant belief system.

The Torah Teacher Sows SEEDS

In Hebrew the word *-TORAH-* should be translated “teaching or instruction” and not “law” as found in most translations of the Scriptures. It is etymologically related to the Hebrew root-verb HEY- RESH-HEY- HRH. In the reflexive, therefore, *TORAH* means to “be impregnated or to receive SEED into oneself.” We can now see why Rebbe HaMoshiach Yahshua used the concept of teaching Torah to His audience was to “impregnate “the listener with SEEDS or SPERM (*Zera*) of ideas, concepts, and themes from the Torah concerning the *MALKUT HASHAMAYIM* (Kingdom of Heaven). I suggest the reader stop now and read from the *BRIT CHADASHA* (Renewed Covenant) in Mattithyahu 13:1-9,18-23; Mark 4: 1-9,13-20; Luke 8:5-15.

Like a SEED the Torah is implanted in a receptive, fertile, nurturing environment in order to bring forth the fruit of the Kingdom in the life of the Yisraelite. The Torah’s ideas, concepts, and ideals will flourish in the hearts and minds of the people in whom they have been “implanted” or sown! They are nourished in the womb of the heart (like a fertilized egg or seed) to come forth later bearing thirty, sixty, or even hundredfold in the life of the Yisraelite. The Torah has the POWER to motivate in order that the Kingdom can be actualized and expressed in the thoughts, emotions, and behavior just as the SEED is destined to grow and bear fruit. Yahshua said even if it is as small as a grain of a mustard SEED (Matt.13: 31-32) it will grow larger. A SEED is planted in order to bear fruit or to actualize its full potential and to enable the continuation of the good fruit or characteristics of its forebears into the future generations.

The ideal dynamic of true Torah teaching is to implant SEEDS that are to be nourished within the heart of the listener, who then becomes integral to the maturing process and ultimately expresses the Torah’s “genetic” code or concepts and truths through mature thoughts and actions in the *mitzvot*. We could say that they begin to live the Kingdom life-style taught by HaMoshiach Yahshua. It is all dependent upon the condition of their hearts (soil) and minds.

Now this metaphorical teaching is very important as it implies that the Torah’s teachings are not presented to the listener as finished ideas that are mindlessly accepted by the recipient of the SEED. The true teaching of the Torah can withstand the tests of critical thinking and reasoning by study of the intellect. The more study we put into the Torah, the more profound wisdom of Yahweh is revealed to us. True Torah living is not mindless, ritualistic living of a religion. This “SEED” principle that Yahshua spoke of in the parable of the Sower imparts to us the truth that Torah study and practice of the *mitzvot* requires a personal incorporation active participation of the student’s heart and mind, in the growth of ideas, concepts, and thoughts. We learn that the ritual commandments, expressed by our behavior, are symbolized concepts that need to be understood as well as practiced. True Torah based behavior or life-style is a very meaningful expression of Yahweh’s whole purpose for the nation of Yisrael.

Seek Purpose not Reason

In our observance of the Torah commands, we need to know the difference between the reason for a command and the purpose of a command.

The search for the reason behind a *mitzvah* answers the question of “WHY?”- Or the explanation of causes. Why did Yahweh give us certain commandments? What caused Him to legislate that command? Every one of these questions is directed to REASON.

The seeking of the purpose of a command is directed to answering the question of finding the meaning behind a commandment. This approach of study accepts the existence of the *mitzvah* and tries to define its meaning by finding the PURPOSE that it is to be observed by the Torah observant Yisraelite.

To help you understand the concept of *kashrut, niddah, brit milah, tefillin, and tzitzit* –we should NOT ask “ WHY?” a person should observe them, but rather ask the question to ourselves what is the true PURPOSE or MEANING that is expressed by these commandments or *mitzvot*.

We cannot answer the question of “WHY?” Yahweh gave certain commandments. The answer is not always given, especially in the *chukim*, but we are beings that need to understand WHAT we need to DO to develop and also maintain our relationship with ABBA Yahweh through Torah observance. Thus, our task is to uncover the PURPOSE of the *mitzvah* so that we may practice it in the true spirit and meaning of the Torah.

Every commandment that Yahweh gave has a purpose behind it. Our ignorance of the purpose of a *mitzvah* does not cancel its purpose for our lives. Our ignorance of the *mitzvah* can lead to its abuse or misuse. Therefore we can only find the purpose of the commandment in the mind of Yahweh or in His Torah, the blueprint of all creation. It is His plan for all His purposes. Once we know its purpose then we can fulfill the meaning Yahweh has placed behind its observance. Pursuing the purpose of the command dictates its performance and therefore contains the satisfaction of doing the command. Finding the purpose is THE KEY to its fulfillment in your life. It gives significance and meaning to the Torah commands and provides the perspective that gives meaning to your life and conduct. Without knowing the purpose of the commandment we seek to observe we cannot enjoy the true *SHALOM* and *SIMCHAH* of doing it! The potential of the *mitzvah* is equal to its purpose in your life. The covenants that Yahweh made with our forefathers are what maintains, sustains, and also produces the purpose of the Torah. Now you can see why the lack of Torah observance does not negate the PROMISES that Yahweh gave to Avraham (**Galatians 3:16-21**). Purpose is a priority to the promises because the promises are made to enable Yisrael to fulfill Yahweh’s plan or purpose for them as a people.

Torah in Today’s Society

The Torah gives Yisrael a moral system within which a person or community can function to fulfill its creation to fulfill its full potential and purpose for its conception. The Torah clearly teaches what is right and wrong, good and bad, and laws of a just nation. What makes the Torah distinct from the laws of the *goyim* is that its Giver is Yahweh, the Master of the Universe. When we live within the boundaries of Torah we counteract the oppression, sin, moral relativity, and chaos resulting from mankind perceiving itself as the source of all power separate from the Creator. Torah is THE SOLUTION to the world’s problems.

Yisrael was chosen to represent this Divine moral and ethical system to the rest of the world, by being the models or the blueprint in their interpersonal, social, and national relationships. To put it another way, Yisrael was to be a model for all civilization. Therefore, in EVERY GENERATION we are to live within the modern society and world while at the same time imposing the Torah commands on areas of life of our lives that Torah presents in its ritualistic, moral, and ethical standards. We are to set boundaries on our lives by the Torah. Therefore, while we are still in the world-we are not of the world, as we are maintain the true perspective of Yahweh as the Master of the Universe and the Master of our lives. We will not be at the center of the universe as the world thinks. Yahweh and His Torah will be at the center of all our thoughts and actions. Thus we can accept those aspects of society that meet the ethical requirements laid down by the Torah, while rejecting those that violate its standards. Now, you can understand why we then need to be educated in the Torah and its *HALAKHIC* standards. By walking in the Torah Yisrael sets the moral and ethical standards as a model within today’s society.

We as Yisrael can re-experience, regardless of time and space, the true purpose and meaning of the commands and rituals by maintaining the Torah based values and RITUALS-but within a modern experience. So we need not dissociate ourselves from today’s society nor do we reject the Torah and its traditions and commands in favor of today’s world. We can enjoy the true *SHALOM* of Torah observance while encountering the world we live in today.

Torah and Symbolism

The student of the Torah has to learn to OBJECTIVELY collect data from the text of the Torah. One cannot impose his own SUBJECTIVE perspectives, intentions, or interpretations to the Torah text. All texts have to be studied *sui generis*, out of the text itself, with the reflection of the writers intentions. If we do not do this, then the Torah we learn and implant as a SEED is not from Yahweh, but is a reflection of our own SUBJECTIVITY IMPOSED CONCEPTIONS on the text and not from the SOWER- *BEN ADAM*.

Now a symbol can be used to obtain information from the text. A symbol may be an object, behavior, or a pattern that represents a TRUTH. Symbols are very powerful in the communication of ideas because words are limited in their ability to supply the data needed to form a final concept.

The Torah then has many symbols (such as SEED) in the *mitzvot* in order to impress their image upon us. The symbols allow the reader to preserve the underlying concept even if the cognitive understanding of the symbol may be forgotten. Thus we have ritual objects and symbols to continually reveal to us the symbolic nature of some of the *mitzvot*. *Tzit-Tzit* and *Tefillin* are good examples. In Biblical times a tassel was a symbol of status or even one's tribal affiliation. Now, very few men are aware of that symbolic meaning of the tassel. However, once that symbolism of the tassel is revealed to a person, then the true symbolic meaning behind the *mitzvah of Tzit-Tzit* will never be forgotten. So symbols can help us “decode” the true intentions of the Creator, to the best of our understanding.

A symbol can never truly fully be understood, as symbols always contain an element of mystery behind them. When we do understand it, the best we can, it can help increase our relationship to that *mitzvah*, and through the symbol draw us closer to Yahweh. The symbol must touch us emotionally and super-rationally to truly draw us supernaturally to Yahweh. Symbols then reveal to us the true depth of Yahweh's Torah.

In understanding symbols, it is important to understand that facts unknown to the recipient of the SEED can never be revealed through symbols, only by new relationships between known ideas. Or to put it in simpler terms- we cannot impose a meaning onto a text that may be meaningful to our contemporary mind, but that were entirely unknown to the ancient Yisraelites to whom the Torah was given. However, new ideas or revelations of the symbols and actions may be found in the text thereby bringing to us a new relationship to the symbol or action in the text.

We must also interpret symbols by the conditions of time and place, and any explanatory text that accompanies the symbols given in the text. The significance of a symbol must also be related to the CONTEXT of its natural, social, cultural, or historical features, as well as taken into account who is doing the speaking or who is being addressed.

Given the above rules for interpretation, ritual objects such as *tzit-tzit*, *tefillin*, *shofar*, *the four species*, *offerings*, etc. can be then understood so that their true meaning and purpose can be imparted to us by the *Ruach HaKodesh*, and observed in a meaningful way as they were purposed by Yahweh. Thereby imparting to us the spiritual power to connect us on a higher spiritual level or supernaturally with Yahweh. In the same manner, circumcision, eating *matzah*, *Shabbat*, and the *Seder* are ALL very symbolic acts or rituals that represent ideas and concepts that must be understood out of the Scriptural symbolism to be meaningfully understood and practiced so they may impart to us as Yisrael their true purpose as intended by Yahweh.

Remember that we are to seek the meaning and purpose of the symbol rather than the reason “WHY?” of a symbol. By seeking purpose we can truly experience a deepening in our relationship with ABBA Yahweh and His Torah. It is by observing these commands we water the “soil” of our heart fertile for the SEED to grow and bring forth fruit in our lives.

Rebbe Yahshua HaMoshiach's Words

Yahshua taught, “And that sown on GOOD SOIL is he who HEARS the word (TORAH) and understands it (or knows its true purpose and meaning in his life), who indeed bears fruit and yields –some hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.” He also said, “He who is sowing the good SEED is the Son of Adam, and the field is the world. And the GOOD SEED, these are the *BNAI MALKUT* (sons of the reign)...” We read in **BERESHITH 26:12**, “And Yitzchaq sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold, and Yahweh blessed him.”

Rebbe Yahshua then understood this concept of Torah being a SEED (*zerah*) that was sown by the speaker into the hearts of the listeners or his *talmidim*. His words (which were ALL Torah and from the FATHER) could fall on various types of hearts. Whether the words took root and bore fruit was dependent on the listener's ability to truly HEAR (*Sh'ema*) the parables and TRUTH He spoke. “Hearing you shall hear and by no means understand, and seeing you shall see and by no means perceive. For the HEART of this people has become thickened, and their ears hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed...” Now, this quote from Yeshayahu HaNavi is followed by; “But still there is a tenth part in it, and it shall again be fore a burning, like a terebinth tree and like an oak, whose stump remains when it is cut down. The set-apart SEED is its stump.” Yahshua's parables were intended for the SEED who could hear and understand His words. They were to become the *B'nai Malkut!* “Because it has been given to you to KNOW the secrets of the reign of the heavens, but to them it has not been given.” Let's look deeper.

In Hebrew the gematria of the letter \aleph -Qof is 100. It is a symbol of “growth cycles” and “holiness (*kedushah*)”. All the cycles (*haqafot*) of the universe teach man that everything in the universe has purpose and a plan.

We have the cycle of seven repeated in the Torah. The gematria of 100 is a cycle of 10x10. The Millennium is on the same cycle of seven –the seventh Millennium. The millennium of KINGDOM AGE is a cycle of 10 also 10x10x10=1,000 years.

A SEED then must follow its natural cycle in order to bear fruit in the life of the Yisraelite. It must be sown, watered, grow, bear fruit, and harvested. The SOWER-*Ben Adam* is NOW sowing the SEED of Torah into the fertile hearts of Yisrael; it needs to be watered by prayer, hearing the Torah, doing the commands, and studying the Torah to grow.

We will then bear the GOOD FRUIT of the *RUACH HaKodesh* (**Gal.5: 22-26**) which is a Torah based walk of set-apartness (holiness). The end result will be a harvest in the last days of the *B'nai Malkut* into the KINGDOM of Yahweh by the *malakim* of Yahweh.

I pray that Yahweh will bless your understanding of this Torah lesson.
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