



ONE TORAH FOR ALL

One Torah shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.
Exodus 12:49

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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The Golden Rule

The Foundation of Relationships

Matithyah [Matthew] 7:12

“Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law (Torah) and the prophets.”

The first thing that one needs to see from this passage is that Yeshua is encouraging His followers to follow Torah. He does this numerous times and in many ways throughout His teaching ministry. This seems to be one of those verses, in which Yeshua summarizes the Torah, into a very concise statement. This summary statement is related to Yeshua’s summary of the two greatest commandments. What Yeshua is doing, is taking the Torah and showing how to internalize it and make it one’s own.

In order to get the full meaning of this passage, we need to start with the very first word of this verse, “therefore.” Whenever we see this word in Scripture, we need to remember that this word ties what is about to be said, with what has already been said. Therefore, we need to back up and see what Yeshua is teaching in the verses directly before this verse.

Matithyah [Matthew] 7:7-11

7 “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you;

8 for every one that asks - receives; and he that seeks - finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone;

10 or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent?

11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

Yeshua teaches a person needs to "ask," "seek," and "knock." These three words form an acronym of the word "ask."

Ask

Seek

Knock

This is just an easy way to remember these three things, which Yeshua teaches us to do, to help us enter into His Kingdom.

But what does it mean to ask, seek, and knock?

Please consider that Yeshua follows this admonition with the illustration of a man and a son, with the man's son asking for something to eat. Of course, when our children are hungry and need something to eat, we do not give them something useless, or even worse, something that would be harmful to them. What good would that do? None!

Therefore, as we know how to bless our children with the things that they need, so too, does our heavenly Father know how to bless His children with those things that we need. Verse eleven then sums up those verses immediately before it, from seven to ten. It is this concept to which the "therefore" in verse 12 is tied. Let us look at these two verses together.

11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

12 Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law (Torah) and the prophets."

Our heavenly Father treats us all equally, and well at that. He gives each and every one of us exactly what we need. He blesses us beyond understanding. And since this is true for all of us, then should we not treat others the way in which our heavenly Father is treating us? To be sure, we should!

Yeshua takes this one step further, and tells us that the way we want people to treat us is the way we should treat them. This is a principle found throughout Scripture.

Galatians 6:7-9

7 Be not deceived; Elohim is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that sows to his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

To state this principle in modern vernacular, it would be something like this: “What goes around comes around.” This principle cannot be thwarted or stopped. If a person treats others with disdain and contempt, then this is what he will reap.

When a farmer sows corn in his field, does he expect to harvest oats? No, of course he doesn't expect such; for it would be madness! Yet, how often do people sow one thing into the lives of those around them, and expect to get something other than what they have sown? This is the essence of insanity!

Have you ever been around a person who is always critical? Guess what that person is always reaping? Yep, exactly what he is sowing! It is kind of a self-fulfilling prophecy. The only thing is, it is much worse than what he has sown. It is kind of like this: when a farmer plants a field he uses a certain amount of seed to sow into the ground. He fully expects the amount of seed which he sowed in that field, to produce an increase at harvest time.

Marqa (Mark) 4:8

“And others fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit, growing up and increasing; and brought forth, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.”

Therefore, whatever it is that a person sows, not only will he receive back what he has sown, but it will be in abundance. This is part of the law of sowing and reaping. This principle is stated differently in the following passage.

Hoshea 8:7

For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind; he has no standing grain; the blade shall yield no meal; if so be it yield, strangers shall swallow it up.

The basic idea which we need to understand here is whatever it is that one sows, he will reap a greater amount in the same kind! Now, this verse in its pashat (literal) meaning and understanding is phrasing it to mean something evil. Reexamining Galatians 6:8 as quoted above, one sees that the sowing and reaping one does can be either for the good or for the evil.

One can sow to the flesh, and reap damnation. Or, one can sow to the Spirit, and reap eternal life.

Therefore, how can we know which one we are doing, that is, what we are sowing? Let us consider a few verses to help us understand what it is we are sowing.

Galatians 6:9

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

First, we need to keep in mind that one needs to keep on doing what is right, regardless of what anyone else around him is doing, or what anyone may be doing to him. Sure, it's pretty easy to do what is right, when things are easy going. But what happens when the going gets tough? Do we still do what is right? It is during these times, that one's true character shines through all the facades he has erected, for all to plainly see.

While we are admonished to treat others in the way that we would want to be treated, this is really what it is all about: others. It is not really about what I get out of something. Rather, it is what I can give to help others.

Romans 12:10

In love of the brethren be tenderly affectionate one to another; in honor preferring one another;

Shaul taught to give preference to our brethren. If one is seeking to exalt himself, he cannot do that.

Matithyah [Matthew] 23:11-12

11 "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."

It is not up to a person to exalt himself. Rather, one should serve those around him with a heart of love. In doing this, he sets an example for others to follow, and allows him to teach, with the heart of a servant.

Kepha Aleph [1st Peter] 5:2-3

2 Shepherd the flock of Elohim which is among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but willingly, according to the will of Elohim; nor yet for filthy lucre, but with eagerness of mind;

3 neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock.

I grew up going to church. I was a pastor for many years. But, it was only on rare occasions that I witnessed the above passage being lived. One of the saddest things I witnessed regularly, was my fellow pastors working at climbing the corporate church ladder. What YHWH has called us to do, is to feed those whom He sets us in the midst thereof. We do not need to be always looking for greener pastures for ourselves. We just need to feed those whom He gives to us to feed. If He wants to increase one's ministry, then it is His choice, not ours!

I remember an occasion during the winter in which it was snowing. It seems that during lambing season, it is during the worst of weather that the ewes give birth to their lambs. That day was no exception. One of our sheep gave birth to twins, a male and a female. For some reason that I do not quite understand, on occasion the mother ewe will reject one of her babies. It is known as a "bummer" lamb. That day was one of those times, in which the mother rejected one of her babies (the female). So it looked as though we were going to have a bummer lamb to feed with a bottle. Perhaps YHWH set this in motion, so that I could use it as an illustration to teach something about His Kingdom.

Other than the fact one lamb is male and one lamb is female, they are identical; it would be difficult to tell them apart. But this "mommy" sheep could tell the difference, and wanted nothing to do with her newborn baby. I even picked up the other lamb, and hid it so she could not see it. She walked around the stall bawling and searching for the baby she wanted; only occasionally pausing to butt the other baby away from her. Even though this baby was only hours old, it had already learned to duck when it saw "mommy" coming.

I could see no reason why this mother sheep had rejected one of her own babies. Apparently, she could see something which I did not. And even if I could have seen her reason and understood why it is that she rejected her baby, I probably would have not agreed with her reason.

I wonder how many times we are guilty of rejecting a fellow disciple, and butting them, and causing them to duck? I wonder if what we see in that person we are rejecting is truly a justifiable reason to reject him? I wonder if YHWH would see our reason as something that is

acceptable? After all, who did Yeshua call to follow Him? Was it not the unlovely, the rejected, and the outcasts of society? Should we not be doing the same?

When a bumper lamb comes along, if we do not bottle feed it, then it will die in a very short time (one or two days). Sometimes we can save the bumper lambs, and sometimes we cannot. It is always sad when a lamb dies. How much sadder it is, when one of His lambs dies (spiritually) because the other sheep have butted it and rejected it!

Matithyah [Matthew] 7:12

“Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law (Torah) and the prophets.”

Don't forget, at one time you, too, were a bumper lamb!

We would not want to be rejected and perish because we had no food! Let us make sure that we are feeding His sheep in a manner that is pleasing to Him! And let us do it in a manner in which we would like to be fed.

Finally, let us examine the verses that follow this verse.

Matithyah [Matthew] 7:13-14

13 Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby.

14 For small is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leads to life, and few are they that find it.

What is the narrow way? The context would strongly suggest that the narrow way is treating others the way that we would like to be treated. It would seem that there are few who actually find this gate. Stop and contemplate this for a few minutes. How many people do you know who actually do this? Probably not very many people do it. The way that most people treat others is not the way they want to be treated. Rather, the way most people treat others is with an air of superiority. They look down their noses at others, and treat them as an unrighteous king would his subjects. Most people treat others as if all others owe them something. This can be readily seen in stores or restaurants. Ever notice how people are always so impatient? The reason for their impatience is because they, personally, are being put out (or so they think). Their time is more important than anyone else's time (or so they think). But when it is their turn to be waited upon, or checked out and someone behind them is being impatient, then suddenly it is a whole different story (or so they think).

Or how about in traffic, when traffic is not flowing as smoothly or as quickly as we would like for it to flow? Once again, the impatience of other drivers can be readily seen, as they think they should be given preference over all other drivers; but what about us? Really now, even though we have all acted like this at times in the past, when we carefully consider this, why should we be given preferential treatment? Who do we think we are, anyway? This type of mindset is totally against the teachings of Scripture! It is about time that each one of us begins to practice on a moment by moment basis, treating others as we would like to be treated.

If we would like to receive preferential treatment, then we had better start giving it out in really big doses! If we would like to be treated like a king (or queen), then we need to start treating others like kings and queens. What we need to do, is to start living the life of a servant. What better place to start living this life, than serving those who live under the same roof as we do? Why not start treating your own family the way that you would like for your family to treat you?

ABBA YHWH, open our eyes to see the way that we are treating others, and if it is not pleasing to You, show us so that we may change and live a life pleasing to You; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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