

Why Would We Keep The Torah?

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For as long as I can remember the Ten Commandments have been revered in the Church as foundational doctrines of the Church. In the Lutheran Church that I grew up in the Ten Commandments are a significant part of the catechetical instruction given to young and new believers before they are confirmed and received as full-fledge members of the Church. In many congregations, of different denominations, the Ten Commandments are taught to young and old alike as a means of indoctrinating the believer into the Christian way of life. Recently legal battles have been taking place within secular courtrooms and school boards concerning the historical significance and appropriate placement of the Ten Commandments in American society. In most cases it is the Christian Church and not Judaism that leads the battle to keep the Ten Commandments visible in public buildings. It is, therefore, a strange phenomenon that the study of the Torah, which is summarized by the Ten Commandments, has met with such resistance, fear, and even adversity by those who would otherwise claim to live by these same commandments.

Before I answer the question “Why would we keep the Torah?” I feel it is important that we all understand what is meant by the word Torah. The answer to this question is not always as simple as it may first appear. First of all, many Christians are not at all familiar with this Hebrew word or what it is referring to. This is due largely to the fact that the word Torah, though appearing at least 206 times in the Hebrew bible, does not appear even once in most English translations of the Bible. To understand this phenomenon is to understand a little about the history and translation of the Bible from its original languages into English.

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew. Around the years 285-247 B.C.E. the Old Testament was translated into the Greek language. This Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is called the Septuagint, and is sometimes listed simply as LXX. The Hebrew Scriptures were eventually translated into other languages such as Latin, German and English. In this process of translating the Hebrew the word *Torah* was translated into Greek as *nomos* and from the Greek into English as *Law*. Unfortunately the Hebrew word Torah does not necessarily mean law, at least not as we would understand it in our American culture. The Hebrew word Torah would be better translated as *utterance, teaching, word, or even revelation*. Thus when we are talking about studying and keeping the Torah we are referring to the words, utterances, teachings and revelations of God and not the law.

Beyond the question of translating the word Torah there are still other questions about the Torah, such as its boundaries. When defining the boundaries of Torah we must acknowledge several layers of understanding. There are some among the believers who would call the whole Bible the Torah, for as Paul wrote to Timothy,

“All scripture is given by the inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16).

More specifically, there are those who define the Torah as only the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These five books of Moses are most commonly referred to as the written Torah. Even more specifically there are those who would limit the Torah to only those revelations which Moses received on Mount Sinai; these would be those teachings contained in Exodus 20:1-Leviticus 27:34. Within Judaism, however, there is also another group of teachings that do not appear in the written Torah, but are considered by many to have equal or greater authority than the written Torah. These teachings were, according to tradition, teachings that God had given to Moses orally while still on Mount Sinai. Moses then passed these teachings on orally to the Children of Israel. These teachings were eventually gathered together and written down in what is now called the Mishnah. Eventually after years of debating the teachings of the rabbis these debates were recorded and categorized. This collection of rabbinical debates on the Mishnah is known as the Talmud. The Talmud is also known as the Oral Torah. Not all Jews accept the authority of the Talmud. So when speaking of the Torah we need to be specific as to what Torah we are talking about.

For the sake of this article, “Why Would We Keep Torah?” we are specifically referring to the *utterances, teachings, and revelations of God* found in the first five books of the Bible, and then secondarily to the rest of scripture as well. While it is our practice to also consider the wisdom of the sages as written in the Talmud we do not accord these writings as having the same authority as Scripture. We would read the Talmud, in the same manner as we would the wisdom and writings of the Church Fathers, Luther, Calvin, Augustine, Bunyan and others. The question we are seeking to address in this article is why would we study and seek to keep the words, utterances, teachings, and revelations of God found specifically in the first five books of the Bible?

At first glance this may seem like a simple and silly question. “After all” some may ask, “don’t all Christian Churches encourage us to study and keep the teachings found in the Bible?” Unfortunately, the truthful, and to some, shocking answer is clearly no! To see this point one need only look at the Ten Commandments. As mentioned earlier most Christian Churches do indeed exalt the Ten Commandments as foundational doctrine for the Christian faith. And yet, when it comes to the fourth commandment which instructs us to “remember the Sabbath and to keep it Holy” there are few Churches practicing or even teaching this commandment. There seems to be nothing more controversial in the Church today than suggesting that Sunday morning is not the Sabbath. Even when it is clearly stated in the scriptures that the Sabbath is the Seventh day, the Church is quick to defend its position and traditions, even though the scriptures do not support them. The same may be said of the kosher laws that list the animals that God created for food. Unfortunately for many in the Church today, Easter Ham, Pig Roasts, Pancake and Sausage Breakfasts and Ham Buns are not on YHWH’S list of food. Once again the Church is quick to justify its traditions and practices, even though they clearly contradict the teachings found in the first five books of the Bible.

So, with the Christian Church willfully teaching and practicing traditions that are clearly foreign to and contradictory of the Torah, the question must be asked why would we now seek to study and keep the Torah? The answer, as we shall see, is threefold.

The first answer to this question is a simple one. Why study and keep the Torah? We study and keep the Torah because the Torah is the Word of God. We agree with Paul's word to Timothy that all scripture is inspired and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness.¹ The word translated as "inspired" is the Greek word "*Theo-pneustos*" which literally means "God-breathed". What is often overlooked in this teaching concerning the Scriptures is the fact that at the time of Paul's writing these words, the only Scriptures that existed were those of the Tanach. (Tanach is an acrostic of the first letters of the Hebrew words Torah [the first five books of the Bible], Nevi'im [Prophets] and Kethuvim [Writings]. The **TaNaK** contains the writings of the Old Testament.) The Gospels, Acts, Revelation and Letters of the Apostles known as the New Testament had not even been written. While the Christian Church may include these later writings as Inspired Scripture, clearly Paul did not. This may also be said for the brethren of Berea whom Paul called more noble than others, "*in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily*" to see if what Paul was teaching concerning the Messiah was indeed true.² Again it is important to realize that only the Old Testament was in existence at the time. The Bereans could not search the Gospels or writings of Paul, for they were not written yet. What scriptures did the Bereans search for proof about the Messiah? They searched the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings of the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul regularly reasoned with those in the synagogue using the Tanach.³ Even Y'shua on the road to Emmaus revealed to his two disciples how the Tanach [Moses and the Prophets] spoke of him.⁴ In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Y'shua concludes the story saying,

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16:31).

What would the rich man's brothers not be persuaded of? Without Torah they would not be persuaded of their sin and need for repentance and salvation. Without the Torah and the prophets they would not be persuaded to believe that Y'shua is the Messiah. As Paul wrote,

"I had not known sin, but by the law [Torah]." (Romans 7:7)

The Torah is the revelation of God concerning our sin and need for his anointed one Y'shua the Messiah. As the Word of God, the Torah is essential to our understanding of

¹ 2 Timothy 3:16

² Acts 17:10-11

³ Acts 17:2

⁴ Luke 24:27

God. The Torah contains the revelation of his righteousness and our own sinfulness. The Torah speaks of our need and hope for salvation.

In the simplest of terms, if God is the giver of all good things as the scriptures proclaim,⁵ then we must know that the Word of God is good and good for us, and this would certainly include the Torah. As Paul wrote,

“...I consent unto the law [Torah] that it is good.” (Romans 7:16).

Therefore we believe that it is good for us to study and keep the utterances, teachings, words, and revelations of God found in the first five books of the Bible, as well as the rest of scripture. As quoted above, we believe the Torah to be God breathed, and therefore worthy of our study and obedience.

The second reason that we study and keep the Torah is because it includes many blessings for doing so. Here we must be clear as to what Torah promises and what it does not. The Torah never teaches that salvation is gained by keeping the Torah. **The Torah teaches that we are saved by grace through faith in the promise of God.** Prior to Messiah coming, people had faith in the promise that the blood of the sacrificed lambs, goats, bulls, and birds would atone for (that is cover) the people's sins. This faith in the promises of YHWH was counted for righteousness. These rituals recorded in Torah are the preparations foreshadowing the sacrifice of the Messiah upon the cross. Believing that blood shed in sacrifice would atone for sin made it possible for thousands in Jerusalem to believe that Y'shua was indeed the Messiah who brought salvation through his death upon the cross. Let it be clearly understood that we teach and believe that no man is justified before God by the keeping of the Torah.⁶ **We believe and teach that we are saved by grace through faith in Y'shua the Messiah apart from the works of the Torah.** With this said, however, we must also confess that while **salvation is by grace, blessings come by obedience!** The blessings of keeping Torah are numerous.

One of the first blessings for keeping Torah is that of protection. This protection is vividly displayed in the many plagues that fell upon Egypt but not upon the Children of Israel. On the night of the Passover, Israel was instructed to sacrifice a lamb and to apply its blood to the doorposts of their homes. Obedience to this Torah meant that they would be protected. God proclaimed to the believers,

“...when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you,...”(Exodus 12:13)

After the Covenant of Sinai was made, the Lord again promised,

⁵ James 1:17

⁶ Romans 3:20

“And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.” (Exodus 23:25).

Again in the book of Deuteronomy we read,

“Wherefore it shall come to pass if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he swear unto thy fathers:...And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon them that hate thee.” (Deuteronomy 7:12-15)

It is this promise of protection that gave inspiration to the understanding of the Torah as a hedge of protection around those who lived within its boundaries. All through the Psalms and the prophets we encounter the beautiful imagery of Israel as a vine planted by the Lord, and the Torah being a hedge of protection round about it.

“Thou has brought a vine out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it,...Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?” (Psalm 80:8-12)

“Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof,...” (Isaiah 5:1-3)

Ezekiel condemns the lying prophets, for not rebuking people from breaking the hedge of protection by their disobedience to the Torah. Ezekiel writes,

“O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord.” (Ezekiel 13:4-5).

The prophet goes on to write

“And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.” (Ezekiel 22:30)

Hosea proclaims that the Torah as a hedge is to protect Israel from straying.

“Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.” (Hosea 2:6)

The book of Nehemiah may be seen as an allegory of rediscovering the Torah and building the hedge of protection. While rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem, the Scroll

of the Torah is discovered and read among the people. Thus the wall of protection and the Torah are restored at the same time. One may even go further with this concept and apply it to the very Garden of Eden, which also had boundaries. When Adam and Eve transgressed the teachings of God, they were expelled out of the Garden of blessing. Even Yeshua taught in his parables,

“There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about...”(Matthew 21:33ff)

Clearly from the context of this parable we know that he is talking about Israel, Torah, and those who were called to lead the people. Even the chief priests, and Pharisees perceived that Yeshua was talking about them.⁷ King Solomon also reminds us of the dangers of going beyond the boundaries of the Torah.

“He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.” (Ecclesiastes 10:8)

To the contrary Isaiah proclaims,

“Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil...Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”(Isaiah 56:1-8).

The prophet Hosea wrote,

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou has forgotten the law [Torah] of thy God... (Hosea 4:6)

Similarly Solomon wrote

“Woe to them that are at ease, but have not walked in the law [Torah] of thy God... (Proverbs 29:18)

Maybe it is the wisdom of Proverbs 30:5 states it in the simplest terms,

“Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.”

In Deuteronomy chapter 28 Moses gives us a wonderful list of all of the blessings that will befall the people of God when they keep the Torah. This first list includes blessings

⁷ Matthew 21:45

on the nation, the cities, homes, marriages, families, land, cattle, businesses and individuals. This first list is quickly followed by another list of all of the calamities and curses that will befall those who fail to keep the Torah. Finally Y'shua taught

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law [Torah], or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one title shall in no wise pass from the law [Torah], till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5:17-19)

This alone should be encouragement enough for any believer to study and keep the Torah. Yet even this is not the primary reason to study and keep Torah. Though all these blessings do indeed fall upon those who obey, these are benefits and not the motivation.

The third reason for keeping Torah is both the primary and simplest reason of all. Y'shua taught

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

Again Yeshua confirms this teaching

"He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: "(John 14:21)

And finally

"If a man love me, he will keep my words:...He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (John 14:23-24)

It is clear that the commandments, words, and sayings that Yeshua is talking about are the Torah. Again while Yeshua spoke these words the Tanach was the only scripture written.

Obedience has always been a sign of love and respect. But in this case it is particularly so. In this portion of Y'shua's teachings from the gospel of John we should notice that much of the teaching about obedience has to do with abiding, dwelling, remaining and being with God.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;" (John 14:16)

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Jn. 14:18)

“At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”(14:20)

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”(14:21)

“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”(14:23)

Finally, Y'shua said

“But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.”(14:31)

This theme continues on into John 15 where the word *abide* is used seven times,⁸ culminating in the statement

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.”(John 15:10)

Why, we may ask, does Y'shua place such great emphasis upon keeping the commandments (the Torah) and abiding with God? One of the first things that we realize about our God in the study of Torah is that he is holy.⁹ One of the first things we realize about ourselves in the study of Torah is that we are not holy.¹⁰ The apostle Paul wrote,

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (2 Corinthians 6:14-16)

Clearly it is the heart of God to dwell with his people. This truth can be seen throughout the scriptures from Genesis, where God walks in the Garden seeking fellowship with Adam¹¹ to Revelation, when the Lord promises that his dwelling place will be among men.¹² The problem is that our sin cannot stand in the presence of a holy God. It is this reality that caused the psalmist to write,

⁸ John 15:4,5,6,7,10

⁹ Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7

¹⁰ Genesis 6:5

¹¹ Genesis 3:8

¹² Revelation 21:3

“If thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”
(Psalm 130:3)

Isaiah boldly proclaims,

“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2)

It was also Isaiah who wrote,

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)

The Apostle Paul succinctly stated it in his letter to the Romans,

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23).

Our sin makes it impossible for us to abide with God. We know that God loves us. The testimony of scripture is quite clear.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16).

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us...” (1 John 3:16)

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10)

It was this love manifest in the sacrifice of Y’shua that opened the way for us to have fellowship with YHWH. On the day he was crucified the evangelist tells us,

“And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom;..” (Matthew 27:51)

It is this tearing of the veil that allows us to now

“come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

But what, we may ask, has this to do with keeping Torah? The answer is simple. God demonstrates his love in giving us Y'shua Messiah, the Lamb of God, who opens the door and makes it possible for us to enter into fellowship with a holy God. We, on the other hand demonstrate our love by keeping his commandments. If we truly love God, then we are not going to be content with only entering into occasional fellowship with him, but we'll want to abide with him. This is exactly what the Torah teaches.

Many of the teachings found in Torah deal with the concept of being Tahor (Clean) or Tam'ei (Unclean). The use of the words "clean" and "unclean" really do not do justice to the concept that Torah is teaching. For this reason I will use the Hebrew words "Tahor" and "Tam'ei". These words have several layers of understanding. Sometimes these two words are relating to things pertaining to two different realms. Tahor pertains to the realm of light, life and God. Tam'ei pertains to this world and the powers of death, darkness, sin and Satan. Certain things that we say and do can influence us into either of these two realms, leaving the influence of these realms upon us. If we wish to abide with God then we should avoid the things that belong to the realm of Tam'ei. Understanding these two realms and learning to discern between them greatly helps us to abide with God. Since the redeemed are called to be a holy nation of priests¹³ we may also interpret the words Tahor and Tam'ei as Useful and Useless. If we truly love God, we will want to serve him. To serve him as priests, as he has called us, we must know how we are to serve. Torah teaches us how to serve as priests. To be a priest we must be in a state of Tahor. This means that we must be living in a fashion that is usable by God to mediate his grace and bear his revelation. This is what God meant when He declared "Be holy for I am holy."¹⁴ While Messiah Y'shua's death and resurrection opened the door for us to fellowship, it is the Torah that teaches us how to abide with a holy God. Y'shua's statement "*If you love me keep my commandments*" is not an arbitrary one. Within his commandments are the very means by which we may live with him and in him. The Apostle Paul, being a Pharisee, understood this distinction and encouraged the brethren writing,

"I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." (Romans 6:19)

Again Paul wrote,

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (2 Corinthians 6:17)

And yet again Paul wrote,

¹³ Exodus 19:5-6; 1 Peter 2:9

¹⁴ Leviticus 11:45

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." (1 Thessalonians 4:7)

Finally James wrote,

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27)

Torah teaches us how to make the necessary distinction between these two states that we may abide in YHWH'S presence. Thus for those who love the Lord, living in the state of Tahor (cleanness) allows us to abide with and serve the Lord. It is also that state of Tahor that allows YHWH to abide in and fellowship with us. We must remember that we are to be the Temple of YHWH. This theme is a fundamental message of the New Testament.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (1 Corinthians 6:19)

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (2 Corinthians 6:16)

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Y'shua Messiah himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 2:20-22)

Ye also, as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Y'shua Messiah. (1 Peter 2:5)

Without the Torah how would we know what is acceptable and useful for a habitation of YHWH. If we love YHWH we will desire his presence in our lives. By understanding and observing YHWH'S distinctions we may indeed become a fit habitation for him.

It is joyful obedience to the commandments (Torah) that most clearly measures the degree to which we love God. As John wrote,

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” (1 John 5:3)

With this said, I must be clear that for obedience to the Torah to be joyful and not grievous requires an incredible change of heart. This change is not something that we strive to do or inspire within ourselves, but rather it is the work of God the Holy Spirit working within in our hearts. The promise of God is that he will change our hearts. The psalmist cried out,

*“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”
(Psalm 51:10)*

God declared through the prophet Ezekiel,

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26)

This change of heart is what the Lord promised through the prophet Jeremiah concerning the New Covenant. What made this covenant new was not its content, the Torah, but its location. The first covenant, given to Moses at Sinai was written upon stone tablets and enforced from outside the believer. The New Covenant will not be written upon stone, but upon the heart of the believer.

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law (Torah) in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God the they shall be my people.” (Jeremiah 31:33).

I believe that this is what Paul meant when he wrote,

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (Colossians 3:16)

This is also what Yeshua meant when he said,

“Now ye are clean (Tahor) through the word which I have spoken to you.” (John 15:3)

When God writes Torah upon our hearts we cannot help but to lovingly fulfill all that is within our power to do. Thus we study and keep Torah because it is in our hearts to do so. We study and keep Torah because it is a joy for us to do so. As David wrote,

"I will delight myself in thy statutes...Thy testimonies also are my delight...Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight...And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved...I delight in thy law [Torah]...thy law [Torah] is my delight...I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord and thy law [Torah] is my delight." (Psalm 119:16,24,35,47,70,77,174)

In conclusion, the answer to the question, "Why would we keep the Torah?" is simply this. First, we study and keep the Torah because it is the word of God worthy of all study and obedience. Second, we study and keep the Torah because there are numerous blessings promised to those who live within its boundaries. And finally and most importantly we study and keep the Torah because the love we have for God makes it impossible for us not to keep the Torah. We keep the Torah because the Holy Spirit has written it upon the tablets of our hearts. What seems so peculiar to me is that others in the Church seem to be offended and even antagonistic to such a concept as keeping the word of YHWH?" I believe in time, more and more believers will begin to see the light, and begin to discern the work of the Holy Spirit writing upon their hearts. Slowly but surely the old traditions of man in the Church will give way to the truth of God's word and more and more will begin to raise questions, searching the scriptures for themselves, and coming to a similar reality. We joyfully and expectantly wait for that day.