

# If You Obey What I Say

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*By Robert B. Holman, Senior Pastor*

Word usage in biblical text has everything to do with understanding what is said. To exemplify, let us study the verse in Yochanan (John) 8:30-32, pulled from two separate texts: the NKJV and the Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) by David H. Stern.

(NKJV): As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in "My" word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

(CJB): Many people who heard him say these things trusted in him. So Yeshua said to the Judeans who had trusted in him, "If you obey what I say, then you are really my talmidim, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

The Greek, transliterated text uses the words "if you abide." To abide means to continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, and tarry. By comparison, the Hebraic text simply says, "If you obey." This expression is easy for everyone to understand. There is no ambiguity associated with this text. It is an absolute that applies to what Yahweh, the Father asks consistently of people who are His. It is obedience to the teachings of the Creator, Blessed Be He, and His Son, Yahshua.

Next, the NKJV text says, "you are my disciples." The word disciple is another unclear rendering of the text. In most explanations, describe this word as a learner or follower. However, the Hebraic text uses the word talmidim that provides a clear, deeper, and more applicable understanding of the Scripture. Let me explain: The Hebrew word talmidim means student. However, not just any kind of student and not a student within the frame of thought that mirrors today's western cultural idea of a student. When Yahshua said in Mattityahu (Matthew) 28:19, 20 "to go and make talmidim," He meant to make exact mirror images of Himself in every aspect of action and thought. So, in other words, He is saying you have been My mimics, now go and make other mimics teaching them everything that I have taught you the way you learned it from Me.

Following the Gospel accounts, the twelve talmidim acted and did exactly as their Rabbi (Teacher). Nowhere in these accounts can we find any deviation of their practices. They were exact mimics. In Mattityahu (Matthew) 10, Yahshua sent his twelve talmidim with exact instructions that they followed completely. In verse 24 Yahshua states, "A talmid (student) is not greater than his rabbi..." In Acts 4:20, Kefa (Peter) and Yochanan (John) stated, "As for us, we can't help talking about what we have actually seen and heard." Sha'ul (Paul) uses this same kind of phrasing in his remarks to Timothy in Bet Timotiyos (2 Timothy) 2:2 that states, "And the things you heard from me, which were supported by many witnesses, these things commit to faithful people, such as will be competent to teach others also." Pilipyim (Philippians) 4:9 states, "Keep doing what you have learned and received from me, what you have heard and seen me doing; then the Elohim who gives shalom (peace) will be with you." Over and over the instruction to the student is to mimic the teacher, in action and in understanding.

Returning to the CJB text, Yahshua states, "If you obey what I say, then you are really my talmidim, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." This passage is connected to Yochanan 14:15 that states, "If you love me, you will keep my commands." Take note of the

supposition in both texts, the word *if*. The Torah (which the Greeks refer to as law) teaches us that obedience defines the true talmid (mimic) and only through his obedience is love for the Father established. Let's take note of the teachings of Moses in D'varim (Deuteronomy) 11:13: "So if you listen carefully to my mitzvot (commandments) which I am giving you today, and to love Adonai your Elohim and serve him with all your heart and all your being."

This passage of Scripture is related to D'varim (Deuteronomy) 6:4 that states, "Sh'ma Yisra'el! Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad [Hear, Isra'el! Adonai our Elohim, Adonai is one]; and you are to love Adonai your Elohim with all your heart, all your being and all your resources." "To Love Him" is to be obedient to His mitzvot (commandments). Beyond the Ten Commandments, the mitzvot of the Creator covers man's aspirations to perfection in morality and intellectual development and man's ability to create, sustain, and prosper. What must be understood is that all of the mitzvot offer a specific benefit to those who observe them whether it be physical, intellectual, or spiritual. In their observance, the believer shows his love for His Creator.

Now, you may ask a question relating to "If you obey what I say" and "if you love Me you will keep My commandments." And, the question is: what did Yahshua say, and what commandments is He referencing? Dear ones, the whole teachings of Yahshua are the focus of the Scriptures. Here is a quote from a Christian commentary (derived from the NIV Matthew Henry Commentary In One Volume, John 14 beginning on page 398, III, 1) who states, "Having Christ's commands, we must obey them. Having them in our heads, we must keep them in our hearts and lives. It is the dignity of those who do the duty of disciples, not those who have the greatest wit and know how to talk for him, or the greatest estate to spend for him, but those who obey his commands. The surest evidence of our love for Christ is obedience to the laws of Christ." Continuing on Page 399, 3,[1] he states "...the condition of the promise which was loving him, and obeying his commands. Love is the root and obedience is the fruit. Where a sincere love for Christ is in the heart, there will be obedience: "If anyone loves me indeed, he will obey my teaching."

Take note that the commentary states, "Having Christ's commands, we must obey them." To which commands is the commentary alluding? Next, he says, "The surest evidence of our love for Christ is obedience to the laws of Christ." To which laws is he referring? Finally, he says, "If anyone loves me indeed, he will obey my teaching." To which teaching is he referring? As you read this commentary, nowhere in the text does the commentator give you any idea what commands, laws, or teachings he is referring to; therefore, it leaves you with the assumption that he is referencing some command that Christ has given whereby the believer is to obey. But, nowhere does he tell you where to find these commands that you are supposed to obey. Could it be that the commentator assumes that you know he is referring to the Law or Torah? Well most people do not. Because one has to ask, are there Ten Commandments or nine, to which one must be obedient?

If we agree with this commentary and assume that he is referring to the commandments listed in Exodus 20, then we will have to question our love for Messiah if we are not keeping the Sabbath qodesh (holy) as the Father has commanded. There can be no assumption of what Yahshua means when he says, "if you love "Me" you will keep My mitzvot (commandments)."

The Ruach HaQodesh (Holy Spirit) does not leave Himself vulnerable when it comes to the expectations for the believer. Dear ones, you have to know and believe that Yahshua was Torah (Law, nomos) compliant. If he were not, then he would have been, according to Scripture [D'varim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 13], a false prophet. Additionally, the commentary also makes reference to "if anyone loves me indeed, he will obey my teachings." If you do proper biblical

study, being led by the Ruach (Spirit), you will see that everything that Yahshua teaches comes out of the Scriptures; the Torah, and the Tanakh, which includes The Prophets and the Writings. One of the meanings of Torah is teachings. Do you suppose this is what the commentator meant? I would dare not say that any sincere believer does not love the Master; however, the sum total of love for him must add up to total compliance with His teachings. Yahshua taught and demonstrated to the world the Torah; which is the Word and who He is.

Understand! The words “in the beginning G-d,” in B’resheet (Genesis) 1:1, and “in the beginning was the Word,” found in Yochanan (John) 1:1, are the same. They are both Ruach (Spirit). In B’resheet (Genesis), the Ruach (Spirit) manifested or revealed all of creation. In Yochanan (John), that same Ruach (Spirit) manifested or revealed Yahshua the Son of Elohim, and let us know that “All things came to be through Him and without Him nothing made had being.” So the teachings of Yahshua originate from the beginning. One of the meanings of Torah is teachings or as Yahshua states, “what I say.” Now these teachings were introduced into the Greek text as law causing controversy amongst the believing body. Do you think that this may have been a deliberate plan of the one who said, “I will be like the Most High,” namely Satan?

The word “nomos” means Law in the Greek language, and when translated means Torah. So, everywhere in the biblical Greek translation where Law is used for the word nomos, it is the Torah that is being referenced. One thing that you must clearly understand is that Yahshua is always teaching and giving reference to the Torah and the Prophets.

Here is what you just have to believe and know without question:

- Yahshua was a Judean (Jew). This Jew is the Savior of mankind. He is the King and Redeemer.
- Yahshua was obedient to his Father, even unto death on the stake. He was totally observant of the Torah of Moses.
- He is the Word made flesh, as Yochanan (John) states in his gospel. Yahshua is the Torah embodied in the Tanakh (Scriptures)...all of Scripture.
- That Scripture consisted of every Elohim breathed word from B’resheet (Genesis) to Mal’akhi (Malachi).

This continues through the B’rit Hadashah (New Testament/Renewed Covenant). Please know that the Scriptures, from B’rsheet (Genesis) to Hazon (Revelation), are in harmony with each other. The only contradiction is that men have violated them by doing the one thing the Father said not to do...“Do not add to and do not subtract from it.”

In order to obey what Yahshua says, it must be clearly understood that what He teaches has not been done away with or abolished. I stated earlier that word usage in biblical text has everything to do with understanding what is being said; therefore, we turn to Mattityahu (Matthew) 5:17 that states, “Don’t think that I have come to abolish the Torah (nomos/ law) or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish but to complete.” The NKJV states it this way, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law (nomos) or the

Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” Dear ones, this biblical statement in and of itself is another teaching that was presented with a misunderstanding of what Yahshua meant. We will comment on that in a later article.

So, how about it? Do you really love the Master? If you do, then you will not mind being different. He has called those who claim to be His sheep to be different. This is what establishes the Hebraic/Messianic Community and their faith to the unbelieving world. Scripture says we are not “conformed to this world's standards, but transformed by the renewing of our minds so that we will know what Elohim wants and will agree that what is good and satisfying and able to succeed” [ Romiyim (Romans) 12:2]. We hold to the teachings of Moeshe (Moses), the Prophets, Yahshua, and the Emissaries (Apostles). The Creator, “Blessed Be He,” set us apart to bring esteem and honor to Him by our conduct and way of life. One can only find this in the Torah. It is the foundation of our faith, and the Father's great and treasured gift to mankind.