

The Commands of Yeshua ~ Part 1

"You are to love Adonai your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.' This is the greatest and most important mitzvah (command). And a second is similar to it, 'You are to love your neighbor as yourself.' All of the Torah and the Prophets are dependent on these two mitzvot (commandments)." (Matthew 22:37-40)

"I am giving you a new command: that you keep on loving each other. In the same way that I have loved you, you are also to keep on loving each other." (John 13:34)

"If you keep My commands, you will stay in My love - just as I have kept My Father's commands and stay in His love. I have said this to you so that My joy may be in you, and your joy be complete." (John 15:10-11)

Introduction

In this new series, we are going to discover just what Yeshua meant by ***"If you keep my commands."*** We will be looking at how the commands of both the Tanakh and the Brit Hadashah are the same and/or different. In preparing for this series, I am indebted to the Ruach for giving me the courage to even attempt to provide some clarity to the body of Believers on this subject and to the work of Tom Blackaby in his book, *"The Commands of Christ: What It Really Means to Follow Jesus."*

Clearly, identifying and clarifying all the commands in the Bible is way beyond the scope of this series. The Rabbis indicate that there are 613 commands (both positive and negative) in the Tanakh alone. According to the [Believer Assemblies International](#) there are 1,050 commands just in the Brit Hadashah. (Click here for a PDF list.) Many of these are similar to those in the Tanakh. I firmly believe that ***"All Scripture is God-breathed and is valuable for teaching the truth, convicting of sin, correcting faults and training in right living; thus anyone who belongs to God may be fully equipped for every good work."*** (2 Timothy 3:16-17) I also believe that this applies to **ALL** Scripture as currently canonized in both the Tanakh and the Brit Hadashah.

That said, my intent in this series is to only look at what Yeshua Himself actually said as recorded in the Gospels, the Book of Acts and those select Epistles where Rabbi Sha'ul is quoting Yeshua in His revelation directly to Sha'ul. Essentially, the "red letter" edition.

Background

"Therefore, go and make people from all nations into talmidim, immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the Ruach HaKodesh, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember! I will be with you always, yes, even until the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20 emphasis added.)

The first few words of the Commission have long been the battle cry of missiologists who inspire us to go into all the world, followed by the evangelists who exhort us to make talmidim, followed finally by the theologians who challenge us to immerse new converts and then hand them off to our religious educators to help these young Believers grow in their faith by introducing them to the deep truths of the Bible.

Unfortunately, many churches today are ignoring the phrase: ***"teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you."*** Too often we interpret this to say, "Have Bible studies with them," or, "Provide Sunday school classes," or, "Give them discipleship books to read and workbooks to complete." In many cases, churches have little to no **organized plan** for discipling believers or any systematic approach to ground Believers in their faith.

What we fail to hear are the actual words of Yeshua who **commands** us to teach ***"them to observe*** [practice, implement, follow, demonstrate] ***everything I have commanded you."***

How can we possibly call Yeshua our Lord if we have never taken the time to know what He has commanded? We cannot **obey** His commands if we do not even know what they are.

Not all of Yeshua's teachings are what we might technically consider to be **commands**. Here are some general categories ¹ into which His teachings can be divided. (Examples are provided.)

- 1. General Observations:** *"For where your wealth is, there your heart will be also."* (Luke 12:34). *"No servant can be slave to two masters, for he will either hate the first and love the second, or scorn the second and be loyal to the first. You can't be a slave to both God and money."* (Luke 16:13)
- 2. Warnings:** *"Also, everyone who says something against the Son of Man will have it forgiven him; but whoever has blasphemed the Ruach HaKodesh will not be forgiven."* (Luke 12:10)
- 3. Commands:** *"In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they may see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven."* (Matt. 5:16) *"If someone asks you for something, give it to him; if someone takes what belongs to you, don't demand it back."* (Luke 6:30) *"But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."* (Matt. 6:33)
- 4. Conversations:** The woman at the well (John 4); the woman caught in adultery (John 8).
- 5. Teachings/Lessons:** Parables such as the sower and the seeds (Luke 8). *"Yeshua said, 'I AM the Way - and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me.'"* (John 14:6)

Whether we would actually consider Yeshua's observations, conversations or teachings as "commands," we should keep in mind that God does not give His people suggestions. Whatever precedes out of the mouth of the Father, the Son, or the Spirit is equally important and authoritative to the Messianic life regardless of how we might want to classify it. Yeshua said, *"Don't you believe that I am united with the Father, and the Father united with me? What I am telling you, I am not saying on my own initiative; the Father living in me is doing his own works."* (John 14:10) And, *"I know that His command is eternal life. So what I say is simply what the Father has told me to say."* (John 12:50)

In my humble opinion, we need to view Yeshua's commands as coming from a father to a son or daughter. We do not obey Yeshua out of obligation or out of fear. We do not obey from loyalty or duty, guilt or selfish ambition. We obey because we know deep down inside that Yeshua loves us and that He has our best interests in mind at all times. We obey out of our love for Him.

God's commands are meant to help us live a happy, wholesome life that is pleasing to Him and to those around us. What is more, living a life that is pleasing to God brings with it unimaginable rewards.

It is not my intention to diminish in any way the many valuable and inspired commands given in the rest of the Scriptures (i.e., The Ten Commandments) or suggest Yeshua's commands are somehow superior to them. Yeshua was with the Father when every single command was given. The teachings of the pre-incarnate Yeshua are foundational to everything else in the Bible.

That said, in my next post, I want to clarify my understanding of the impact of the commands in the Tanakh on the teachings and commands of Yeshua found in the Brit Hadashah before digging into the actual commands of Yeshua.

¹ Categories taken from *"The Commands of Christ: What It Really Means to Follow Jesus"* by Tom Blackaby.