



Walking in the Steps of the Master:

A Twelve Step Guide to Discipleship

COME TO ZION MINISTRIES

Isaiah 49:6...I will give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be my salvation to the ends of the earth.

Located in the Western Galilee, Israel

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Step Seven: Learning the Word of GOD

Learning the Word of GOD was always an important activity for the Jewish family. Instruction in the written Torah (the first five books of the Hebrew *Tanakh* or the Old Testament) was initiated at around age five and it required memorization of the Torah text. More formal training began around age ten, with rabbinical level training at around age fifteen. The seriousness of the study could be illustrated by the high level of understanding that Yeshua demonstrated when He was discussing Torah with the Sages at age twelve, Luke2:41-52.

The motivation behind the teaching of the Torah instructions is found in the specific command to teach the children found in Deuteronomy 6:6, 7 NLT:

And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.

The Apostle Paul built upon this concept when He admonished Timothy regarding the Word of GOD, 2 Timothy 2:15 KJV:

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

It is helpful to examine each portion of this reference to gain the full meaning that Paul intended. To 'study,' means to diligently labor at the appointed task. In other words, the study of the Word of GOD was to be the most important labor that one could commit to, in their life. The meaning for 'approved' is to be accepted by GOD, not to be esteemed by one's own opinion or the opinion of others. The word 'workman' refers

to being a teacher, of which we should not shame the LORD by our lack of attention to study. And the reference to dividing the Word of GOD means to rightly expound on the text, which requires understanding of the plan of GOD's salvation that is found from Genesis to Revelation.

There is no activity in our life that is more important than being able to show people from the Word of GOD, what GOD's plan is for their life. Our study is not about coming up with pet theories or exotic teachings, but rather it is a matter of providing practical wisdom, straight from GOD's Word. This wisdom is important for us to grasp, for each word of the Scriptures is from GOD and this understanding is absolutely necessary for our mission in GOD, 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 NLT:

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip His people to do every good work.

It will be beneficial for the disciple to first study of the Word of GOD represented by the Torah portions (the first five books). It is here that we can learn of GOD's dealings with mankind from the very beginning, which set a pattern of His will that is constant even to this day. Therefore the disciple should next spend time learning about the history of the people of Israel, to see how they fared with the Torah instructions. One will see the blessings that come with obedience to GOD's will and the problems that result from disobedience to GOD's will. Next, one's study should include the poetic books that take the instructions of GOD and apply them in the personal lives of the people involved: Job struggling to understand the purposes of GOD, King David learning to trust GOD in difficult times, the wisdom of Solomon advising us regarding daily matters. Finally we come to the prophetic books, which show the heart of GOD for His people and His plans for the whole world.

From the time of Yeshua, we have the Gospel accounts, which show us the proper application of the Torah instructions. We have the historical accounts from Acts and the Epistles to show how the early assemblies used the power of GOD to transform the known world. The Epistles provide GOD's wisdom regarding our daily activities, our attitude to GOD and mankind. Finally, we have the prophetic Book of Revelations to bring the work started in Genesis to a conclusion.

We need to study the entire Bible to clearly understand the purposes of our Father and to be able to relate these purposes to a world that is ignorant of the ways of GOD. Our work then is consistent with the great commission given to us by Yeshua, to teach the new believes to obey all the commands of our LORD, Matthew 28:20.