

Lesson 11

Cross

Formed

Kids

What is Torah?

Torah is the life-giving word of God that teaches and trains us in God's ways.

Read aloud: Exodus 20:1-20

Recommended Illustration

This lesson is complex and rich, so you'll need to dig deep into your creative ability. And yes, you DO Have creative ability—after all, you were made as the image of the Creator!

Here's the goal for your illustration:

1. Get your kids to imagine the possibility of transformation.
2. Get your kids to realize their need for transformation.

Of course the default will be something about caterpillars turning into butterflies, but I want to encourage you to make this personal and unique. Maybe there's a discipline you've kept that has worked a skill into your life. Maybe you spend your entire life disliking a food, then you tried it and tried it until you finally liked it. Maybe you were never a morning person, but with continued discipline, you found yourself waking up early more easily.

Reach into your experience and find a way to connect your life to this idea of transformation.

Helpful Insights

****It's important to note here that by "life-giving word" we do not mean that Torah can do the work of regeneration. That is the exclusive work***

of the Gospel. Torah, rather, gives life in the sense that it teaches Israel a better way to live. It gives them a roadmap for human flourishing.

Torah is to function as the "wisdom and understanding" of Israel (Deut. 4), which gives them life and sets them apart. By keeping it, they will become a fully flourishing covenant community.

More importantly, by Israel's faithfulness to Torah they will continue in the blessing of Yahweh. Torah is an enormously significant theme coursing throughout Scripture. It all starts at Horeb/Sinai as far as human history goes. However, the syntax surrounding the idea of Torah in Deuteronomy is later picked up in the wisdom literature as "Wisdom," which is described as the accomplice of God in all His work, even as early as creation. Later, Christ is identified as the eternal "Word" accompanying God at creation. It becomes clear that Torah, Wisdom, and Word all point to Christ and are all one in a sense. Christ fulfills the joint purposes of the other three. We do not want to say that Torah is Christ. We do want to say that Christ is the embodiment of Torah and the fulfillment of all Torah is meant to be.

Keeping Torah is an exercise in skillful living. Loving our neighbor, honoring our parents, being faithful to our commitments, keeping our word, are all things that God teaches us to do because they reflect His character. Keeping Torah means living as those who have a knowledge of God.

The Point

Torah is not just a set of rules, but rather it is a way of life, and a way of attaining flourishing. The bottom line summation of the requirement of Torah is a faithful love of Yahweh that defines the life of the believer--it should overwhelm the thoughts, actions, and energies over and above every other devotion. Torah is the word that teaches the child of God how to live a life of love toward God and God's people.

