

# ***THE TORAH: WHAT IS THE TORAH AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT.***

***The First Five Books of the Bible make up the Torah.***

***Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy.***

It is by far the greatest collection of books ever written.

***What if we didn't have the Torah?***

- Humanity would not know about God.
- There would be no Old Testament.
- There would be no New Testament.
- There would be no Bible. No Koran.
- There would be no Judaism, no Christianity, no Islam.
- There would be no Western Civilization.

***We would have never heard of:***

- The Garden of Eden.
- Adam & Eve.
- Moses.
- The Exodus.
- The Ten Commandments.
- **A Loving God.**

***The Torah Gave Us:***

- The idea that every human life is precious.
- We are all created in God's image.
- Love your neighbor as yourself.

## ***So what is the Torah About?***

### ***“Six Basic Things.”***

- 1) Stories about events that took place over 3,000 years ago.***
- 2) It is a Book about God.*** Who is God? What does God want From us? How can we relate to Him.
- 3) It is a Book about Human Beings.*** Especially about the problem of Human Nature.
- 4) It is a Book about a Chosen People.*** A small nation called the Jews who God chose to receive the Torah. To live by its laws and to spread its teachings around the world.
- 5) The Torah is a Book of Laws.*** 613 of them as a matter of fact. These are divided into two parts. Laws governing morality. How people should behave towards other people. How people should relate to God.
- 6) The Torah teaches Wisdom.*** The most important thing people can possess. Without wisdom, people cannot be good. Good intentions do not produce good people, or good actions. Without wisdom, Good intentions are worse than worthless, and they often produce evil.

### ***The Torah begins with the Story of Creation.***

Though the Torah is a Jewish Book, it does not begin with the story of the Jews. In fact, no Jews show up until Chapter 12. The Torah begins with God. And the God of the Torah is the God of all people.

Unlike every other Creation Story in history, the Creator of Genesis is in no way Human.

- God is not born.
- God does not have sex with other gods or humans.
- God is not a part of nature. God created nature.
- God is Moral.
- God cares about Human Beings.

In every religion before or at the time of the Torah:

- Those gods were born.
- They had sex with other gods and humans.
- They were a part of nature.
- That is why humans worshipped nature and nature gods.
- Nature is Amoral, God is Moral.
- Nature does not say, “Love your Neighbor.” God does!
- Nature says, “Let the fittest survive.”

***In the Creation Story, the last thing God creates is “Man.”  
Or more precisely, “Woman.”***

- Woman could be considered the Pinnacle of Creation.
- They are placed in the Garden. They are pain-free and immortal. No Death.
- They can eat of everything and anything in the Garden except The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.
- But, the human beings disobey.

***The most important part of the story is, why would the humans eat of that tree knowing the consequences?***

This has been discussed by philosophers and theologians for thousands of years.

Let me suggest two possibilities they made this decision.

***Human Beings Prefer Free Will.***

- 1) The ability to choose between Good and Evil, with its inevitable suffering and death, to an immortal painless life without Free Will.
- 2) Human Beings not only want to know Good and Evil, but they also want to determine what is Good and Evil.

***“To Be Like ‘God’”***

The first reason is Noble.....The second one is not.

Human Beings lose their way when they think that they, not God,  
are the source of Morality.

It's a story that plays out again and again in the Torah and  
throughout Human History.