

# Did Yeshua Break Torah?

On Saturday mornings at our synagogue before our regular Shabbat service, we have a question-and-answer class where those attending can ask any question they have. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to answer thousands of questions about Messianic Judaism, the Bible and how we walk out our faith as believers in Yeshua. Some of the people who attend are those who have come to faith in Yeshua (Jesus) from one of the other branches of Judaism. Some come from one of the branches of Christianity. Some come from some other faith background, and others come from no faith background at all. One thing they all have in common is a desire to learn what the Bible actually says about a variety of topics.

One of the most often asked-about subjects deals with Yeshua and His relationship to the commandments of Torah. After all, many of those coming from Judaism have been taught that Yeshua broke away from following and teaching the Torah and started a new religion (or at least His followers did). Many those from Christianity have been taught that Yeshua did away with Torah, or in some cases, released His followers from any obligation to Torah. The questions I am asked usually begin with a statement such as "In Mark, it says this," or "In Acts, it says," and then the verse is usually quoted out of context as a basis for the establishment of a Yeshua who either violated or changed G-D's commandments.

One such question, which was asked recently, was based upon a verse from John 19:7 (TLV): "The Judean leaders answered him, 'We have a law, and according to the Torah He must die, because He claimed to be Ben-Elohim!'"

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The person asking the question brought up this verse and asked if it proved that Yeshua had in fact violated the Torah. This question is one that is of significant importance to Jewish people who are inquiring about the Messiahship of Yeshua and should be of equal importance to non-Jewish seekers.

This is because the Torah teaches that the Messiah would be a prophet like Moses, and the Torah also teaches that one of the signs of a false prophet is that they would violate the Torah. So, if Yeshua violated the Torah, He could not be the Messiah. So, when someone reads a verse like John 19:7, which seems to say that Yeshua violated the Torah, it can and should make them question if Yeshua is the Messiah, and we as teachers have to be able to explain verses like John 19:7 to clarify that Yeshua never once violated a Torah commandment.

The truth is that if we read John 19:7 closely, we see that the accusation against Yeshua isn't actually that He violated the Torah at all. The accusation by the Judean leaders was that they have a law that someone shouldn't claim to be Ben-Elohim (Son of G-D), and because Yeshua claimed to be the Son of G-D, according to the Torah, He deserved to be killed. There is no Torah commandment that says someone should not claim to be a Son of G-D. As a matter of fact, the words "son of G-D" are used in the Torah in numerous places, including Genesis 6, and Solomon is also called a son of G-D in 1 Chronicles 28:6.

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If the Torah doesn't include a commandment that forbids claiming to be a son of G-D, what are these Judean leaders claiming? Look again at John 19:7 where it says, "we have a law," not G-D has a law, or Torah has a law. Here is the answer: the Judeans had a law against claiming to be a son of G-D, and because they claimed Yeshua violated their law, they wanted Him killed as if He had broken a Torah commandment, which carried the death penalty.

This concept should be reasonably easy for us to understand today because all around us, people have changed the definitions of sins and want people judged as if they have broken G-D's Law because they have broken their personal laws or rules. Another way to describe what these Judean leaders were doing is to say they were being legalistic.

Yeshua taught against this precise issue in Mark 7:7-9: ""And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." Having left behind the commandment of God, you hold on to the tradition of men.' He was also telling them, 'You set aside the commands of God, in order that you may validate your own tradition.'"

I answered the question that Saturday morning the same way I will answer here. No, Yeshua never once broke a Torah commandment, nor did He teach anyone to do so, including us today. If He had, He would have disqualified Himself from being our Messiah.

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