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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The Three Things the Law Does

TEACHING SUMMARY

This teaching explains the biblical purpose of God's Law by examining what the Torah was designed to accomplish. The lesson begins by defining the Hebrew word *Torah*, which simply means "instruction." Rather than presenting God's Law as a burden, the teaching describes it as the loving instruction of a Father who desires His people to know the best way to live. The central premise of the lesson is that God's Law consistently performs three functions throughout Scripture: it defines sin, it brings blessing when obeyed, and it brings curses when disobeyed. These three purposes remain consistent from Genesis through Revelation.

The first purpose of the Law is to define sin. The teaching surveys numerous passages from both the Old and New Testaments to demonstrate that sin is consistently described as violating God's commandments. Jeremiah explains that Judah sinned by refusing to obey God's voice and walk according to His Law. Ezekiel calls people to turn from their sins by observing God's statutes. Daniel confesses that Israel transgressed God's Law and therefore experienced the covenant curses. Paul likewise teaches in Romans that through the Law comes the knowledge of sin, while Romans 7 explains that he would not have known coveting was sinful unless the Law had specifically forbidden it. Finally, 1 John defines sin as lawlessness, reinforcing the consistent biblical connection between God's Law and the definition of sin. The teaching concludes that without God's instruction, humanity would have no objective standard by which to recognize sin.

The second purpose of the Law is to bring blessing through obedience. Beginning with Deuteronomy 11, God places before Israel both blessing and curse, promising blessing to those who listen to His commandments. The lesson traces this theme throughout Scripture by examining passages in Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, the Gospels, James, Peter, and Revelation. These passages consistently associate blessing with delighting in God's commandments, walking in His ways, seeking Him wholeheartedly, hearing His Word, and putting it into practice. Yeshua pronounces blessings upon those who hunger for

righteousness and those who suffer for righteousness' sake. James describes God's Law as the perfect Law of liberty and promises blessing to those who continue in it as doers rather than merely hearers. The teaching argues that the biblical pattern never changes: obedience to God's instruction is repeatedly associated with blessing because God's commandments reveal the path of life and righteousness.

The lesson then examines the third purpose of the Law: bringing curses upon disobedience. Returning again to Deuteronomy, the teaching shows that God warned Israel that turning away from His commandments would result in covenant curses. Deuteronomy 28 details the consequences of persistent rebellion, while Joshua publicly read both the blessings and the curses after Israel entered the land. Nehemiah records the people's commitment to walk in God's Law under covenant oath, acknowledging both its blessings and its warnings. Jeremiah likewise proclaims a curse upon those who refuse to obey God's covenant. These passages demonstrate that God's Law not only reveals righteousness but also establishes the consequences of rejecting His instruction.

The teaching then considers Galatians 3:10, a passage frequently misunderstood as calling God's Law a curse. The lesson explains that Paul is quoting Deuteronomy and is referring to the curse that comes upon those who fail to keep God's commandments. The Torah itself is not the curse. Rather, disobedience brings the curse because God's covenant establishes both blessings for obedience and consequences for rebellion. This understanding remains consistent with the rest of Paul's teaching, which affirms that the Law is holy, righteous, and good while identifying sin—not the Law—as humanity's problem.

The lesson concludes by explaining how Messiah relates to these three purposes of the Law. God's Law continues to define sin so that believers know what should be avoided. Through faith in the Word of God, who is Messiah Yeshua, believers receive grace and salvation. Messiah removes the curse that results from breaking God's Law, but He does not remove the Law itself. Since the Law defines sin, believers who have received grace should desire to avoid sin by walking in God's instruction. Obedience does not earn salvation but naturally flows from genuine faith. The teaching summarizes this principle by stating that people outwardly practice what they inwardly believe. Those who truly believe God's Word will seek to live according to it because they recognize it as God's loving instruction for righteous living.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Torah means "instruction."
- God's Law serves three primary purposes.
- The Law defines what sin is.
- Scripture consistently connects sin with breaking God's commandments.

- The Law gives believers the knowledge of sin.
 - God promises blessings to those who obey His commandments.
 - Scripture repeatedly associates blessing with walking in God's ways.
 - James calls God's Law the perfect Law of liberty.
 - Disobedience brings covenant curses.
 - The Law itself is not the curse; breaking it brings the curse.
 - Messiah removes the curse of sin through grace.
 - God's Law continues to define righteous living.
 - Genuine faith produces obedience.
 - Believers obey because they trust God's Word.
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FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. The Hebrew word *Torah* means _____.
 2. The first purpose of God's Law is to define _____.
 3. Through the Law comes the knowledge of _____.
 4. God promises _____ for obedience.
 5. Disobedience brings _____.
 6. James calls God's Law the perfect law of _____.
 7. Messiah removes the _____ that comes from breaking God's Law.
 8. Genuine faith produces _____.
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Challenging

1. Daniel confessed that Israel had _____ God's Law.
2. Romans 7 says Paul would not have known _____ was sin apart from the Law.
3. According to 1 John 3:4, sin is _____.
4. Joshua publicly read both the _____ and the curse.

5. Nehemiah records that the people entered into a covenant _____.
 6. Galatians 3:10 quotes from the book of _____.
 7. Revelation 22 promises that there will no longer be any _____.
 8. The teaching concludes that people outwardly practice what they inwardly _____.
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GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to understand that *Torah* means "instruction"?
 2. How does God's Law help us recognize what sin is?
 3. Why do you think Scripture consistently connects blessing with obedience?
 4. What is the difference between the Law being a blessing and the Law becoming a means of salvation?
 5. How does understanding Deuteronomy's blessings and curses help explain Galatians 3:10?
 6. Why does the teaching emphasize that the Law itself is not the curse?
 7. How does Messiah remove the curse without removing God's Law?
 8. In what ways does genuine faith naturally lead to obedience?
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ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. Instruction
2. Sin
3. Sin
4. Blessings
5. Curses
6. Liberty
7. Curse
8. Obedience

Challenging

1. Transgressed
2. Coveting
3. Lawlessness
4. Blessing
5. Oath
6. Deuteronomy
7. Curse
8. Believe