

The Joy of the Word

At synagogues around the world in the fall of the year is a delightful celebration. On *Simchat Torah* there is dancing and singing and a jubilant procession of the Torah scroll. “*Simchat Torah*” means “The Celebration of the Torah”. What an awesome idea! Shouldn’t we all be rejoicing and celebrating the gift of the Word of God?

Sometimes believers misunderstand the meaning of the word “Torah”. It does not just mean “law” in the restrictive, punitive sense. Instead, it means instruction. That’s why Jesus said “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets.” (Matt. 5:17) The Torah, along with the Writings, the Prophets and the *B’rit Hadashah* (New Testament) is the instruction manual to a joyful and productive life.

During the year every synagogue follows a cycle of readings from the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament. The Torah is not in book form, but is written on a continuous scroll. So when the readings of the Torah conclude in Deuteronomy 34, the scroll is re-rolled to begin again at Genesis 1:1.

Jewish people everywhere take this opportunity to rejoice in the gift of God’s instructions. Multiple congregants take turns carrying the Torah as they process through the synagogue and as many people as possible are honored with the opportunity to come to the front and read from the designated scripture.

Can you imagine a big, noisy celebration at your congregation just because we have access to the precious word of God? Hmmmm, maybe that’s something we should think about—rejoicing in the blessing of the Word of God.

Do you want to love God more? Spend more time with Him. We have in our hands a precious connection to El Shaddai, the Shekhinah, and the Messiah. Thousands have died to preserve it and translate it. And it sits gathering dust in homes across America.

We’re told in Acts 13:22 that David was a man after God’s own heart. How did he get that way?

In Psalms 119:97, David declares his passion: “O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day.”

Take a moment today to look at the Bible with fresh eyes. David didn't have his own copy. The disciples had to go to synagogue to read the word. There were no concordances, no pocket New Testaments. Learning the scriptures took real effort.

What a precious treasure we hold in our hands! May we each make it our song and our life. Let us meditate on His words and His ways that we may walk in His paths forever.