

Love is the Foundation of the Torah

This is a Part 3 of the teaching of Jesus about the **Greatest Commandment** which is found in Matthew 22:34-40. A lawyer asked Jesus this question:

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Torah?”

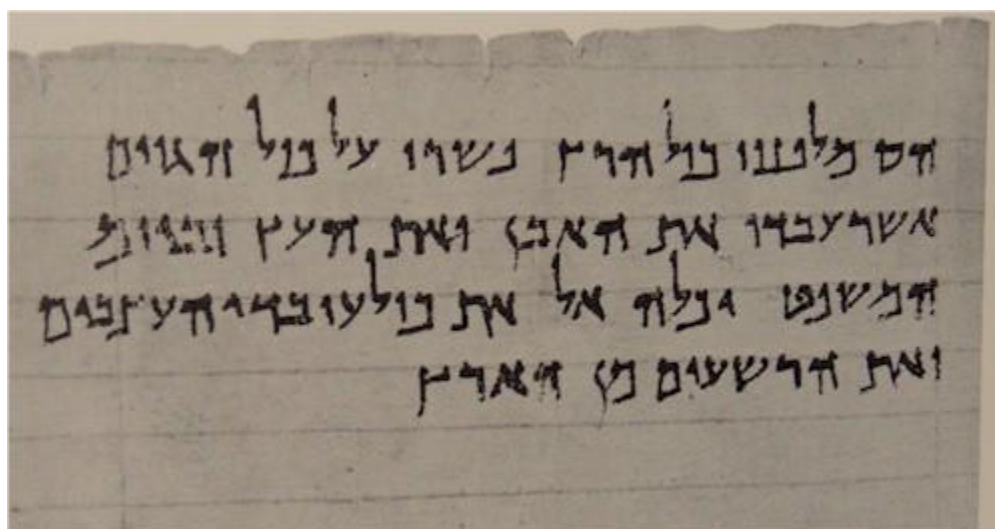
This is the answer Jesus gave him:

*“You shall love Yahweh your Elohim (God) with all your heart,
with all your soul, and with all your mind.”
This is the first and great commandment.
And the second is like it:
“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

Then Jesus added this closing line:

“On these two commandments hang all the Torah and the Prophets.”

What did “hang” mean to his ancient Jewish audience? In order to understand this, **we need to know how the ancient scribes wrote Hebrew words on the scrolls.** After they prepared the material to be written on, they drew lines. You can see the lines on the picture of a Dead Sea Scroll below. (Hebrew is read from right to left.)



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Then the scribes hung each Hebrew letter from the line. We set English letters set on the line. **The purpose of the line in both languages is to support the letters.**

The point Jesus made was that the two commandments combined – “**love God BY loving your neighbor**” – are **the foundation that supports all of the other commandments.**

*Without “**loving God BY loving your neighbor**”
the other commandments in the Torah
will have no foundation to support them.*

This is one of the most important teachings of Jesus.

Shalom,
Jim Myers, President
Biblical Heritage Center, Inc.

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