

Is it important to diligently study the Bible?

In weeks reading is from Parashat Ki Tavo (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8*), the name “*Ki Tavo*” means “*when you come,*” is taken from the opening verse of the section of Scripture that says: וְהָיָה כִּי-תָבוֹא אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ נַחֲלָה וְיִרְשָׁתָהּ וְיִשְׁבַּתָּ בָּהּ: “*When you come into the land that the Lord God has given you as an inheritance ...*” (26:1) *Devarim / Deuteronomy 28:1* states וְהָיָה כִּי-תִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת-קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ לְשָׁמֵר לַעֲשׂוֹת... The phrase תִּשְׁמָעוּ אֶת-קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ is translated as “*diligently obey*” according to the NASB. The first word תִּשְׁמָעוּ is a 3rd-ע Qal noun meaning “*to hear or to listen*” and תִּשְׁמָעוּ is written in the imperfect Qal second person ms form denoting a past action that is in progress but not completed at this time. These words are translated in English as to “*diligently obey.*” When we were young a parent would say “*you are not listening to me,*” which has the meaning that you are not listening and obeying. This verse has the same meaning “*if you listen to the voice of the Lord your God*” in Hebrew, the imperfect form indicates that listening is an ongoing process that is not yet completed. This indicates that listening is a process of obeying God’s voice that is ongoing and a life long process. A parallel is also drawn within the sentence on “*listening or hearing the voice of the Lord God*” and “*to keep*” (לְשָׁמֵר) and “*to do*” (לַעֲשׂוֹת) what God has commanded.

שְׂדוּקָה יִתֵּן / The Holy Scriptures	
ספר דברים פרק כו	<i>Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:1-5</i>
<p>א וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה לְעֵינֵיכֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְפָרְעָה וְלְכָל-עַבְדָּיו וְלְכָל-אֶרֶץ: ב הַמַּסּוֹת הַגְּדוֹלֹת אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֵיךָ הָאֵת הַמַּפְתִּים הַגְּדוֹלִים הָהֵם: ג וְלֹא-נָתַן יְהוָה לְכֶם לֵב לְדַעַת וְעֵינַיִם לְרֹאוֹת וְאָזְנִים לְשָׁמֵעַ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ד וְאוֹלֶךְ אַתֶּכֶם אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בַּמִּדְבָּר לֹא-בָלוּ שְׁלֹמֹתֵיכֶם מֵעַלְיֶיכֶם וְנַעֲלָךְ לֹא-בָלְתָה מֵעַל רַגְלֶךָ: ה לָחֶם לֹא אָכַלְתֶּם וַיַּיֵּן וְשִׁכָּר לֹא שָׁתִיתֶם לְמַעַן תִּדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:</p>	<p>29:1 These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb. 29:2 And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, ‘You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land; 29:3 the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders. 29:4 ‘Yet to this day the Lord has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear. 29:5 ‘I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot. 29:6 ‘You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or strong drink, in order that you might know that I am the Lord your God. (NASB)</p>

The verses we are looking at this week are from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:1-5*. The Aramaic Targum translates *29:1-5* as the following: א וקרא משה ואמר להון אתון חמיתון ית כל מחוותא דעבד מימרא דיי לעיניכון בארעא דמצרים לפרעה ולכל עבדיו ולכל יתבי ארעיה ב ניסין רברבן דחמיתון בעיניכון אתיא ותימיהא רברביא האינן ג ולא יתב מימרא דיי לכון ליבא למינשי אלהין למידע ועינין למרמזא אלהין למיחמי ואודנין לטמטמא אלהין לצייטא ואתון נשיתון אורייתא דליבכון ורמזתון בעיינכון וטמטמתון אודניכון בזמן יומא הדין ד והליכית יתכון ארבעין שנין במדברא לא {בלמו} <בלון> כסותיכון מעילוי גושמיכון וסנדליכון לא איטלעו מעילוי ריגליכון ה לחמא דעיבורא לא וטמטמתון אכלתון והמר ואתון אכלתון ואתון לא שיתון והות אורייתא דתירא סמתרא במדרישיכון מטול דתיתעסקון בה ותינדעון ארום אנה הוא יי אלקכון *And Moshe called to all Israel, and said to them: You have seen all the plagues which the Word of the Lord wrought in the land of Mizraim on Pharaoh and all his servants, and all the inhabitants of that land; those great temptations, signs, and wonders which you saw with your eyes. And the Word of the Lord hath given you a heart not to forget, but to understand; eyes, not to blink, but to see; ears, not to be stopped, but to listen with: yet you have forgotten the law with your heart, and have blinked with your eyes, and have stopped your ears, unto the time of this day. And I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your garments have not become old upon your bodies, nor your shoes worn away from your feet. You have not eaten leavened bread, nor drunk wine new or old; and My law hath been diligently delivered in your schools, that you might be occupied therein, and you might know that I am the Lord your God. (Targum Pseudo Jonathan)* Note how the Targum translates, “*the Word of the Lord*” brought the plagues in Egypt, the “*Word of the Lord*” gives us a heart not to forget, and eyes to see, and ears to hear. Thinking about “*listening,*” “*hearing,*” and the “*Word of the Lord,*” reminds us of the Apostle Paul’s words in *Romans 10:13-17* where he was quoting from *Joel 2:32* פליטה תהיה ובירושלם היהיה פליטה “*Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.*” Paul says Πῶς “*individually, each and everyone*” who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. Paul goes on to say how necessary it is for people to hear about the Messiah by asking four questions: (i) “*How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed,*” (ii) “*How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard,*” (iii) “*How will they hear without a κηρύσσοντος*” (“*someone to officiate as a herald*” translated as “*preacher*”), and (iv) “*How will they preach/proclaim unless they are sent?*” Paul backs these questions up with the statement ἄρα ἢ πιστεύεις ἐξ ἁκοῆς, ἢ δὲ ἀκοῆ διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ “*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (Christou).*” Paul emphasizes that faith comes by hearing the Word of God (*Romans 10:17*). In other words, the faith that leads to life is the faith that comes by placing trust and making a conscious response to the truth about the Messiah according to the Scriptures in this life. All of Scripture directs us to the absolute need to believe upon Yeshua the Messiah for salvation. There is one standard of measure for truth and that is the written Word of God. God gave us one standard for all men, thus, keeping separate weights and measures for salvation is an abomination unto the Lord (see Parashat Ki Tetzze, *Devarim / Deuteronomy 25:13-16*). Moshe says “*These are the words of the covenant...*” speaking of listening and hearing and God is the enabler, just like Moshe says in Parashat Kitavo. The Lord is the one who enables us to believe, and faith cannot come without hearing or reading God’s Word. In light of these verses, how important do you think it is to be reading God’s word daily? The word is meant to feed our spirit and to strengthen our faith in Yeshua, therefore we need to be diligent in studying God’s Word.