What Yehovah Speaks we will do

By

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We see in the Torah that at first Yehovah commanded the children face to face by speaking his words. It was after this that the People told Moshe.

Shemot/Exodus 20:16-17

16 “You speak to us,” they said to Moses, “and we will obey; but let not Elohim speak to us, lest we die.” 17 Moses answered the people, “Be not afraid; for Elohim has come only in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may be ever with you, so that you do not go astray.”

So the people requested the structure we have today. Either the Priest (Kohen) or the Prophet (Navi) must communicate and receive answers from Yehovah. Up through the entire account leading up to the next point is the second when it uses the English word command it is not Tzavah or Mitz’vah or even Tzav. It is Davar, which is the Hebrew word for Word as in that which is spoken. But we see from the account of Shemot 34:34. In context we read

Shemot/Exodus 34:29-35

29 So Moses came down from Mount Sinai. And as Moses came down from the mountain bearing the two tablets of the Pact, Moses was not aware that the skin of his face was radiant, since he had spoken with Him. 30 Aaron and all the Israelites saw that the skin of Moses’ face was radiant; and they shrank from coming near him. 31 But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the chieftains in the assembly returned to him, and Moses spoke to them. 32 Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he instructed them concerning all that Yehovah had imparted to him on Mount Sinai. 33 And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. 34 Whenever Moses went in before Yehovah to speak with Him, he would leave the veil off until he came out; and when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded (Yetzuveh), 35 the Israelites would see how radiant the skin of Moses’ face was. Moses would then put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

So for this study today we will look at two Hebrew words, which are Tzav, and Mitz’vah and in Part two of this study we will look at Tzavah and Davar.

First let look at Tzav (Tzadie-Vav), which is a masculine noun and reference number 6673. This is found on page 1065 in the NEHC and on page 846 in the BDB. It has the meaning of commandment.

Yeshiyahu/Isaiah 28:10-14 (10,13)
That same mutter upon mutter, 
Murmur upon murmur, Now here, now there!"  
Truly, as one who speaks to 
that people in a stammering jargon and an 
alien tongue is he who declares to 
them, “This is the resting place, let the 
weary rest; this is the place of repose.”  
They refuse to listen.

To them the 
word of YEHOVAH is: “Mutter upon 
mutter, Murmur upon murmur, Now here, 
now there.” And so they will march, But 
they shall fall backward, And be injured 
and snared and captured.

Hear now 
the word of YEHOVAH, You mean of 
mockery, Who govern that people In 
Jerusalem! (JPS Tanakh)

The interesting use of Tzav here is that the people of Jerusalem and earlier Ephraim. The 
use here is that they almost have contempt for his commands. The translation in English 
losses the subtly I feel.

Hosea 5:11

Ephraim is defrauded, 
Robbed of redress, 
Because he has witlessly 
Gone after futility. (JPS Tanakh)
Ephraim is going after a command which is their undoing. Yet they are unfaithful in keep what Yehovah commands.

The next word we will look at is Mitz’vah. With the Mem prefix to the verb tzavah we get the noun mitz’vah. It is reference number 4687 and found in the NEHC on page 753 and in the BDB on page 846. It has the meaning of commandment or literally “from command”

The first place we see this is Bereshit/Genesis.

Bereshit/Genesis 26:5

5  inasmuch as Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge: My commandments, My laws, and My teachings.” (JPS)
5. because that listened Avraham in my voice and he kept my charge, my commandments (mitzvotiy), my practices, and my teachings. (my interpretation)

Knowing that mitz’vah is “from command” we can see that this indicated that Avraham followed not a completed torah for his time but just what Yehovah tzavot (commands). The chuqqotiy are statues or practices. He kept the practices given to him. The teachings (torotiy) are what was taught to him not a completed torah.

So looking for commands of Yehovah in the Tanakh is a matter of looking for both tzavah and Mitz’vah.

Shemot/Exodus 15:26

26  So he cried out to Yehovah, and Yehovah showed him a piece of wood; he threw it into the water and the water became sweet. There He made for them a fixed rule, and there He put them to the test. 26  He said,
“If you will heed Yehovah Eloheykha diligently, doing what is upright in His sight, giving ear to His commandments and keeping all His laws, then I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians, for I am Yehovah your healer.”

Here Moshe is telling the children of Yisrael that if they will listen to his voice and to his commandments and keep all his practices or statues he would be their healer. He would not bring those diseases of Egypt on them. Like Avraham the children of Yisrael had to listen to his voice and keep from his command. The word used here again is Mitz’vah but also adds his chuqqav, which are the things he tells them to do.

Shemot/Exodus 16:28

15 When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?”—for they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “That is the bread which Yehovah has given you to eat. 16 This is what Yehovah has commanded: Gather as much of it as each of you requires to eat, an omer to a person for as many of you as there are; each of you shall fetch for those in his tent.”

17 The Israelites did so, some gathering much, some little. 18 But when they measured it by the omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no deficiency: they had gathered as much as they needed to eat.

19 And Moses said to them, “Let no one leave any of it over until morning.”

20 But they paid no attention to Moses; some of them left of it until morning, and it became infested with maggots and stank. And Moses was angry with them.

21 So they gathered it every morning.

Heb. man hu; others “It is manna.”
each as much as he needed to eat; for when the sun grew hot, it would melt. 22 On the sixth day they gathered double the amount of food, two ømérs for each; and when all the chieftains of the community came and told Moses, 23 he said to them, “This is what Yehovah meant: Tomorrow is a day of rest, a holy sabbath of Yehovah. Bake what you would bake and boil what you would boil; and all that is left put aside to be kept until morning.” 24 So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered; and it did not turn foul, and there were no maggots in it. 25 Then Moses said, “Eat it today, for today is a sabbath of Yehovah; you will not find it today on the plain. 26 Six days you shall gather it; on the seventh day, the sabbath, there will be none.” 27 Yet some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, but they found nothing. 28 And Yehovah said to Moses, “How long will you men refuse to obey My commandments and My teachings?  

Now, I have us read a little of the chapter for context. This of course is the account of the giving of Manna the bread from heaven. Again this was another test. He taught a practice over a period of 5 days there was Manna out there and only one omer was gathered. Then on the Sixth day they were allowed to take two. On the seventh day there was none. The Test was again were they listen to what he was saying through Moshe. In verse sixteen we see tsivah (tsavah) which is the command given. Then in verse 28, Yehovah asks “How long will you men refuse to obey/keep my commandments (mitz’votay) and my teachings (v’torotay). In the chapter we see Yehovah teaching them about the seven day week and commanding them how to treat each day. The setting apart of the seventh day which not everyone understood.

Shemot/Exodus 20:6

6 but showing kindness to the thousandth generation of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Here in the middle of the words given by Yehovah He states that will do mercy (oseh chesed) to those who love me and keep/obey my commandments (mitvotay). This gets kind lost in with no graven image. If you love him then you will keep his commands.
Shemot/Exodus 24:12

12 Yehovah said to Moses, “Come up to Me on the mountain and wait there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the teachings and commandments which I have inscribed to instruct them.”

Yehovah calls up Moshe to receive the stone tablets to get what we are called the ten commandments. This he will show and instruct them with.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 4:2, 13, 22, 27

2 Speak to the Israelite people thus: When a person unwittingly incurs guilt in regard to any of Yehovah’s commandments about things not to be done, and does one of them—

13 If it is the whole community of Israel that has erred and the matter escapes the notice of the congregation, so that they do any of the things which by Yehovah’s commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt—

22 In case it is a chieftain who incurs guilt by doing unwittingly any of the things which by the commandment of Yehovah Elohayv ought not to be done, and he realizes his guilt—

27 If any person from among the populace unwittingly incurs guilt by doing any of the things which by Yehovah’s commandments ought not to be done, and he realizes his guilt.
In Leviticus/Vayiqra, now we see what is to be done when one does not do the commands of Yehovah. He gives specific commands to them which we can see at the even of chapter 7 (Vayiqra 7:37-38) in which he tells them this is the teaching which had commanded (tzivah) Yehovah to Moshe. This happened at Mount Sinai in the days of his commanding (tzavoto) the children of Yisrael.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 5:17

17 And when a person, without knowing it, sins in regard to any of Yehovah’s commandments about things not to be done, and then realizes his guilt, he shall be subject to punishment.

Again this is similar to last reference.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 22:31

31 You shall faithfully observe My commandments: I am Yehovah.

He again reminds them to be careful to keep/obey his commands and do them.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 26:3, 14, 15
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>If you follow My laws and faithfully observe My commandments,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>But if you do not obey Me and do not observe all these commandments,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>if you reject My laws and spurn My rules, so that you do not observe all My commandments and you break My covenant,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are to walk in the practices he commands us. He tells of all the good things he will do if we keep his commands. In verses 14-15 sets up what he will do to us if we don’t do as he commands. This is a early indication of the blessings and cursings. We also see that they who don’t keep his commands break his covenant.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 27:34

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>These are the commandments that Yehovah gave Moses for the Israelite people on Mount Sinai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the end of Leviticus/Vayiqra it tells us what all we have read are the mitz’vot which commanded (tsivah) Yehovah.

Bamidbar/Numbers 15:22,31,39,40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>If you unwittingly fail to observe any one of the commandments that Yehovah has declared to Moses—anything that Yehovah has enjoined upon you through Moses—from the day that Yehovah gave the commandment and on through the ages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But the person, be he citizen or stranger, who acts defiantly reviles Yehovah; that person shall be cut off from among his people.

Because he has spurned the word of Yehovah and violated His commandment, that person shall be cut off—he bears his guilt.

Speak to the Israelite people and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments throughout the ages; let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. That shall be your fringe; look at it and recall all the commandments of Yehovah and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your lustful urge. Thus you shall be reminded to observe all My commandments and to be holy (set-apart) to your Eloheykhem.
Verse 22-23 shows us that the commands took effect at the commanding of Yehovah in that day, when spoken and heard, and will last generations. So we see that the pre-existence of these torot (teachings) was not from the beginning but from the point it was commanded by Yehovah to Moshe, then Moshe commanded the Children of Yisrael. These things that he taught he commanded. The disobeying of his command by accident (whether by unknowing or forgetting) is forgiven. Yet we see in verse when done defiantly (with full knowledge not to do it) then that person is cut off from the congregation. Because it is rebellion just like when the children of Yisrael decided not to go up to the land.

Bamidbar/Numbers 36:13

At the end of Numbers/Bamidbar, we see that these in this sefer also was the mitzvot and the judgments that Yehovah Commanded through Moshe on the children of Yisrael. This was given when they were at the steps of Moab, at the Jordan near Jericho. This was nearing the end of there journey.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 5:10, 29(26), 31(28)
And I wanted to show some context with his section dealing with commands. This is the repeat of the earlier giving of the Ten Commandments. The exception here is that much more detail is given around what was said with Moshe and the children of Yisrael and Yehovah’s reaction to that. Yehovah was pleased that they had a spoken what they did. Yet it also setup a way of communication between us and Yehovah that we lack today. While we may talk to him we don’t hear him answer back as one talks to another person.
And this is the Instruction—the laws and the rules—that Yehovah Eloheykhem has commanded [me] to impart to you, to be observed in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, so that you, your children, and your children’s children may revere Yehovah Eloheykha and follow, as long as you live, all His laws and commandments that I enjoin upon you, to the end that you may long endure.

Be sure to keep the commandments, decrees, and laws that Yehovah Eloheykhem has enjoined upon you.

It will be therefore to our merit before Yehovah Eloheynu to observe faithfully this whole Instruction, as He has commanded us.”

A continuation from the previous chapter shows us that the mitzvot, chuqqim, mishpatim where all commanded. Like the translation with seems to place practice and judgement as miztvot we see that they are all tzivah (commanded).
9 Know, therefore, that only Yehovah Eloheyykha is HaElohim, HaEl who keeps His covenant faithfully to the thousandth generation of those who love Him and keep His commandments, 10 but who instantly requites with destruction those who reject Him—never slow with those who reject Him, but requiting them instantly.

11 Therefore, observe faithfully the Instruction—the laws and the rules—with which I charge you today.

Like the previous chapters we see that again if you love him keep/obey his mitzvotayv. We also see that again hamitz’vah, and hachuqqim and hamish’patim are to be kept as he commanded you.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 8:1,2,6,11

8:1 You shall faithfully observe all the Instruction that I enjoin upon you today, that you may thrive and increase and be able to possess the land that Yehovah promised on oath to your fathers.

2 Remember the long way that Yehovah Eloheyykha has made you travel in the wilderness these past forty years, that He might test you by hardships to learn what was in your hearts: whether you would keep His commandments or not.
Therefore keep the commandments of Jehovah Eloheykha: walk in His ways and revere Him.

When you have eaten your fill, give thanks to Jehovah Eloheykha for the good land which He has given you.

Take care lest you forget Jehovah Eloheykha and fail to keep His commandments, His rules, and His laws, which I enjoin upon you today.

And now, O Israel, what does Jehovah Eloheykha demand of you? Only this: to revere Jehovah Eloheykha, to walk only in His paths, to love Him, and to serve Him.

We see the text used that to keep/obey mitzvotayv, chuqqottayv, mish’patayv which he commanded that day. It starts the chapter with it and ends the chapter with it.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 10:13
Yehovah Eloheykha with all your heart and soul, keeping Yehovah’s commandments and laws, which I enjoin upon you today, for your good.

What does Yehovah want from us? Keep his commandments, and practices. Those commands by Yehovah and given through Moshe. To do this in devotion to him and him alone.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 11:1,8,13,22,27
that I enjoin upon you this day; 28 and curse, if you do not obey the commandments of Yehovah Eloheykhem, but turn away from the path that I enjoin upon you this day and follow other elohim, whom you have not experienced.

_I.e., who have not proved themselves to you; cf. Hos. 13.4._
This is the start of explaining the blessings and the curse as we previously saw in Numbers. Keeping his way will be given blessing and not will be given curses.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 13:5

| 13:1 | Be careful to observe only that which I enjoin upon you: neither add to it nor take away from it. |
| 13:2 | If there appears among you a prophet or a dream-diviner and he gives you a sign or a portent, saying, “Let us follow and worship another elohim”—whom you have not experienced—even if the sign or portent that he named to you comes true, |
| 13:3 | do not heed the words of that prophet or that dream-diviner. For Yehovah Eloheykhem is testing you to see whether you really love Yehovah Eloheykhem with all your heart and soul. |
| 13:4 | Follow none but Yehovah Eloheykhem, and revere none but Him; observe His commandments alone, and heed only His orders; worship none but Him, and hold fast to Him. |
Here Moshe is quite clear we are not to add to it nor take away from the text. These are the things which he commanded (metzaveh from command). The false prophet is given to test his people whether they are truly devoted to him. Walk after Yehovah, Fear him and keep/obey his commandments. We are to hear him and serve him.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 15:5

4 There shall be no needy among you—since Yehovah Eloheykha will bless you in the land that Yehovah Eloheykha is giving you as a hereditary portion—5 if only you heed Yehovah Eloheykha and take care to keep all this Instruction that I enjoin upon you this day.

It is interesting that if we keep his commandments then there will be no needy. Why? Because in the commands are the practices, commandments, and judgments to ensure their protection and care. Notice that also we see that as things are command for that day. As they were taught it because something they were to keep for generations.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 17:20

18 When he is seated on his royal throne, he shall have a copy of this Teaching written for him on a scroll by the levitical priests. 19 Let it remain with him and let him read in it all his life, so that he may learn to revere Yehovah Elohayv, to observe faithfully every word of this Teaching as well as these laws. 20 Thus he will not act haughtily toward his fellows or deviate from the Instruction to the right or to the left, to the end that he and his descendants may reign long in the midst of Israel.

Here is the miqra dealing with the king. The text in Hebrew says vakatav lo et-mishneh hatorah hazot al-sefer which in English would be “and write to him a second of the teaching this in a scroll” It is not clear who is to write it as the JPS renders it the levitical priests and yet it could also be the king himself.
Devarim/Deuteronomy 26:17,18

16 Yehovah Eloheykha commands you this day to observe these laws and rules; observe them faithfully with all your heart and soul. 17 You have affirmed this day that Yehovah to you Elohim, that you will walk in His ways, that you will observe His laws and commandments and rules, and that you will obey Him. 18 And Yehovah has affirmed this day that you are, as He promised you, His treasured people who shall observe all His commandments, and that He will set you, in fame and renown and glory, high above all the nations that He has made; and that you shall be, as He promised, a holy people to Yehovah Eloheykha.

Here is the Yehovah speaking to the Children of Yisrael. Yehovah ha’emar’at (you the speaking) this day he shall be our Elohim. Keeping his commands were an important aspect of being his people.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 27:1,10

27:1 Moses and the elders of Israel charged the people, saying: Observe all the Instruction that I enjoin upon you this day. 2 As soon as you have crossed the Jordan into the land that Yehovah Eloheykha is giving you, you shall set up large stones. Coat them with plaster 3 and inscribe upon them all the words of this Teaching. When you cross over to enter the land that Yehovah Eloheykha is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Yehovah, Elohe of your fathers, promised you—4 upon crossing the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I charge you this day, on Mount Ebal, and coat them with plaster. 5 There, too, you shall build an altar to Yehovah Eloheykha, an altar of stones. Do not wield an iron tool over them; 6 you must build the altar of Yehovah Eloheykha of unhewn stones. You shall offer on it
burnt offerings to Yehovah Eloheykha,  
7 and you shall sacrifice there offerings  
of well-being and eat them, rejoicing  
before Yehovah Eloheykha. 8 And on  
those stones you shall inscribe every word  
of this Teaching most distinctly.  
9 Moses and the levitical priests spoke to  
all Israel, saying: Silence! Hear, O Israel!  
Today you have become the people of  
Yehovah Eloheykha: 10 Heed Yehovah  
Eloheykha and observe His  
commandments and His laws, which I  
enjoin upon you this day.  
11 Thereupon Moses charged the people,  
saying

Now not just Moshe is commanding the people now but also the elders of Yisrael too. To keep all the mitz’vah that from commanding to you this day. This is the account that Yehoshua will accomplish in the land of Caanan. The writing of this teaching for all to see. Then we see also Moshe and the levitical priests speaking the same thing. This is the beginning of the transfer from Moshe commanding to the Elders and the Priests commanding.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 28:1,9,13-15,58, 69

28:1 Now, if you obey Yehovah  
Eloheykha, to observe faithfully all His  
commandments which I enjoin upon you  
this day, Yehovah Eloheykha will set you  
you high above all the nations of the earth.  
9 Yehovah will establish you as His holy  
people, as He swore to you, if you keep the  
commandments of Yehovah Eloheykha and  
walk in His ways.  
13 Yehovah will make you the head, not  
the tail; you will always be at the top and  
ever at the bottom—if only you obey and  
faithfully observe the commandments of  
Yehovah Eloheykha that I enjoin upon you  
this day, 14 and do not deviate to the  
right or to the left from any of the  
commandments that I enjoin upon you this

Construction of vv. 2–4 uncertain.
day and turn to the worship of other elohim.

15 But if you do not obey Yehovah Eloheykha to observe faithfully all His commandments and laws which I enjoin upon you this day, all these curses shall come upon you and take effect:

58 If you fail to observe faithfully all the terms of this Teaching that are written in this book, to reverence this honored and awesome Name, Yehovah Eloheykha,

69 These are the terms of the covenant which Yehovah commanded Moses to conclude with the Israelites in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb.
The chapters 27 and 28 are most recognized as the blessing and cursings chapters though Moshe has been mentioning this since Numbers/Bamidbar. In verse 69, it tells us that all that was commanded Moshe from Yehovah was added to that besides what he commanded at Horev (the Ten Commandments) This is now the whole covenant which is all his commands. Who was this covenant with:

Devarim/Dueteronomy 29:8-14

8 Therefore observe faithfully all the terms of this covenant, that you may succeed in all that you undertake.

9 You stand this day, all of you, before Yehovah Eloheykhem—your tribal heads, your elders and your officials, all the men of Israel, 10 your children, your wives, even the stranger within your camp, from woodchopper to waterdrawer—11 to enter into the covenant of Yehovah Eloheykhem, which Yehovah Eloheykhem is concluding with you this day, with its sanctions (uba’alato 422 and into his oath); 12 to the end that He may establish you this day as His people and be Eloheynu, as He promised you and as He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 13 I make this covenant, with its sanctions (ha’alah 422 the swear/oath), not with you alone, 14 but both with those who are standing here with us this day before Yehovah Eloheynu and with those who are not with us here this day.

They took an oath to keep his covenant, to keep the whole of Torah, his teaching, and to hear and keep his commands. The covenant is not just the Ten Commandments but the commands.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 30:8,10,11,16

8 You, however, will again heed Yehovah and obey all His commandments that I enjoin upon you this day. 9 And Yehovah Eloheykha will grant you abounding prosperity in all your
undertakings, in the issue of your womb, the offspring of your cattle, and the produce of your soil. For Yehovah will again delight in your well-being, as He did in that of your fathers, 10 since you will be heeding Yehovah Eloheykha and keeping His commandments and laws that are recorded in this book of the Teaching—once you return to Yehovah Eloheykha with all your heart and soul.

11 Surely, this Instruction which I enjoin upon you this day is not too baffling for you, nor is it beyond reach.

16 For I command you this day, to love Yehovah Eloheykha, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His laws, and His rules, that you may thrive and increase, and that Yehovah Eloheykha may bless you in the land that you are about to enter and possess.
Even when we find ourselves scattered as we are today. We can shuv (return) to keeping the teaching of this covenant all the mitzvot, chuqqim, and mish’patim (commandments, practices, judgments). He will bring us back to his land for us to possess it. We know we can find these written in this sefer (book) we read today.

Next part we will look at the verb these come from and examine the words, which Yehovah spoke, and how this relates to commands and commandments.